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MEN

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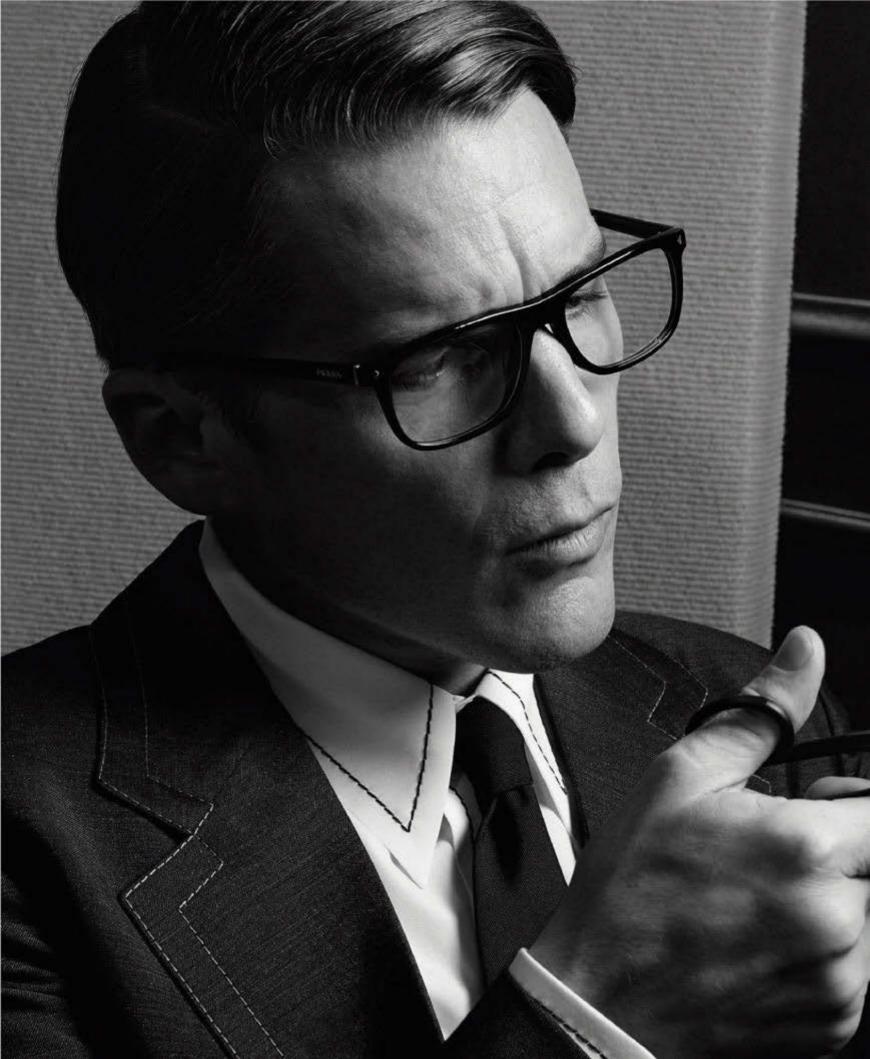
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# PRADA EYEWEAR

Ethan Hawke New York, November 2014







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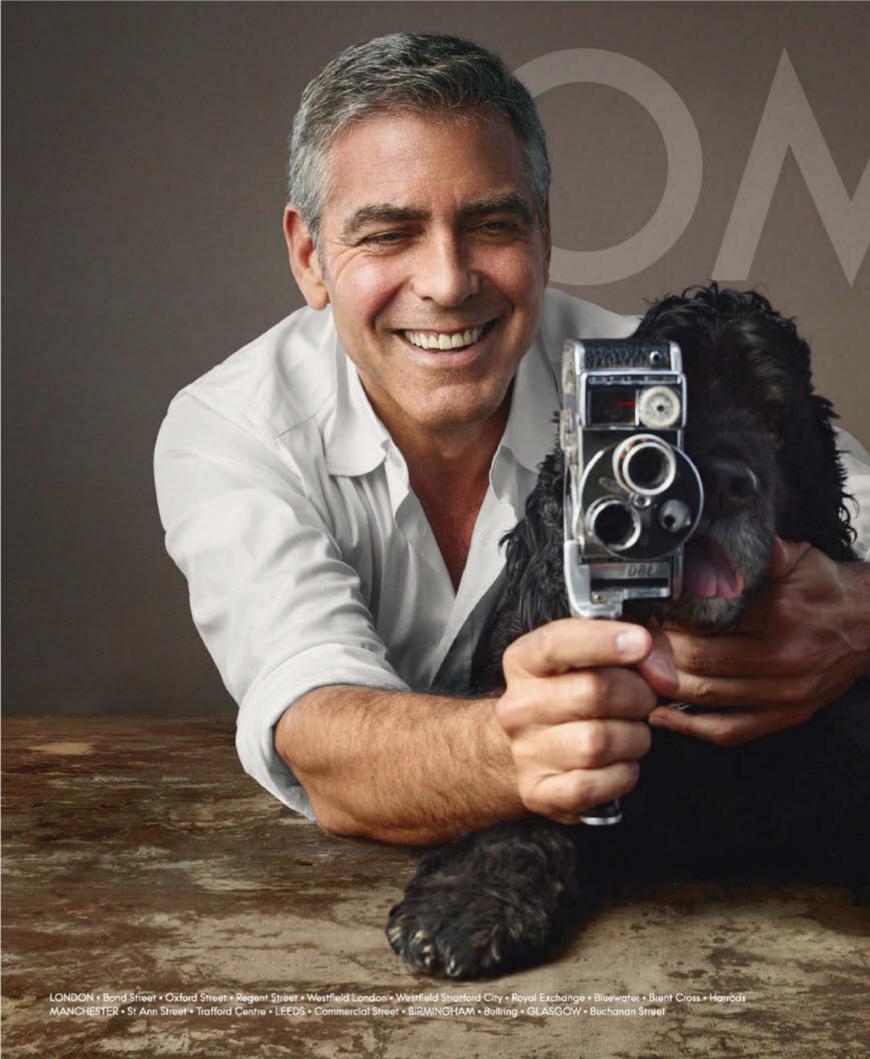


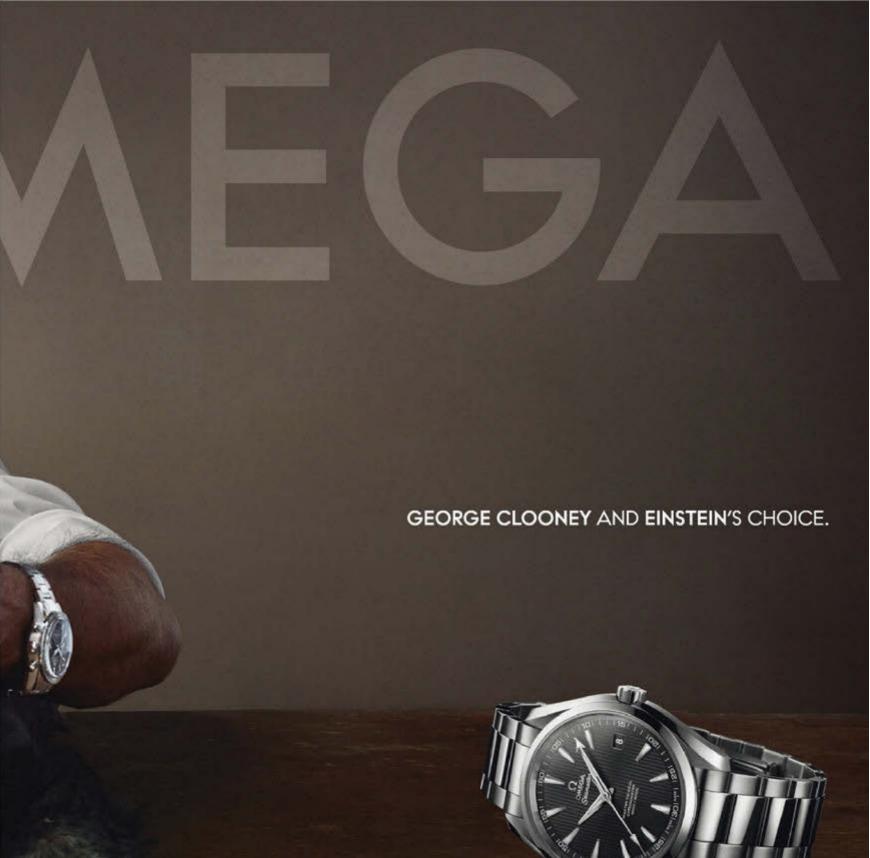
















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N°5

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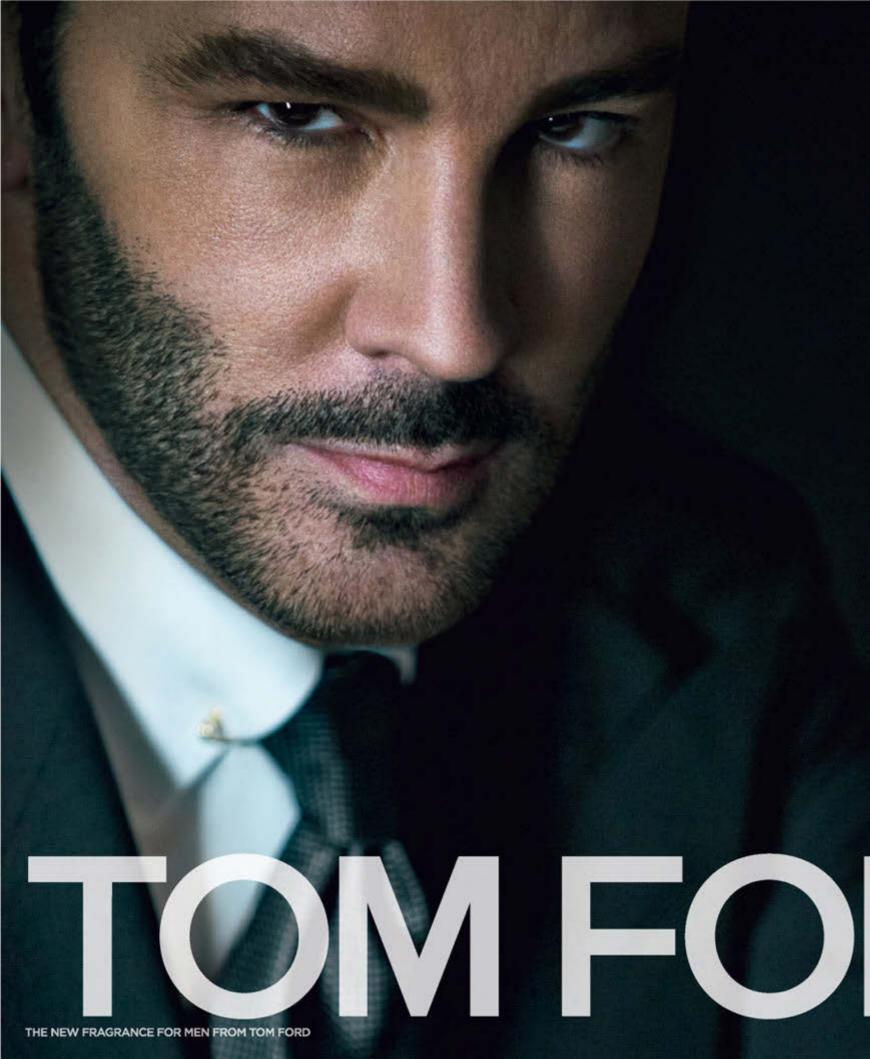
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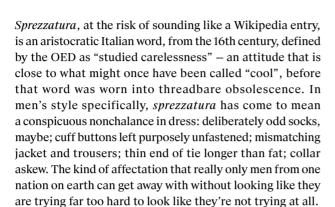
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# SIGNORE FLAGMAN ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES GRAHAM

### **FOREWORD**

By Alex Bilmes, Editor-in-Chief



We don't theme our issues at *The Big Black Book*. We already have a focus — masculine luxury — and we stick to it. Nonetheless, this issue reveals an enduring preoccupation: Italian style and design. So, in addition to those Italians you'd always expect to find here — Giorgio Armani, Prada, Dolce & Gabbana, Zegna, Tod's and so on — we profile Brunello Cucinelli, Ennio Morricone and Lamborghini and we remember Giò Ponti and the Rome of Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*. If all those names spoken in a row sound as romantic to you as they do to me then you, too, have been seduced by Italy. How could you not be? It's one of the most seductive places on earth, as well as one of the most maddening. And *sprezzatura* — that effortful insouciance — is at least partly responsible for both the appeal and the frustration.

Italy is a country one comes to know well in my job, if not necessarily to understand. Each January and June, I go to Milan for the menswear shows, and I go probably twice more to see our contacts there. Barely a week goes by without someone from our magazines making their way across the Alps, and we talk on the phone to people in Italy every day. There are those of us — me, for one — for who even that is not enough. Last year, for fun, I also went to Tuscany and Puglia: the bountiful north and the parched south.

Italy is many things to many people, and very little that anyone can agree on. It is conservative and corrupt. Traditional and modern. Ordered around the family and flagrantly adulterous. Indisputably, it is nicely turned out.

I am grateful to John Hooper's excellent recent book, *The Italians*, for pointing me in the direction of the Duke of York's words in Shakespeare's *Richard II*, about "fashions in proud Italy, whose manners still our tardy-apish nation limps after in base imitation".

I wouldn't go that far myself but it is still the case that, for all its many problems — and it is suffering from profound political and economic troubles — the rest of the world looks in envy at Italy: the art, the architecture, the fashion, the furniture, the food and — forgive me, but it's true — the fornication. Although, sadly, no longer the football.

Us dapper Brits might fancy ourselves quite the urbane, cosmopolitan thing but the soft-shouldered Italians can still show us a thing or two when it comes to untucked enjoyment of the finer things in life. They used to say that to be born male and Italian was to have won the lottery of life. Whatever the country's woes, I'm not sure that isn't still the case.

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### THE LOCK & CO PANAMA HAT

#### Worn by JASON BASMAJIAN

CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER
GIEVES & HAWKES

Not just the oldest hat shop in London, but the oldest in the world, Lock & Co has been in business at No 6 St James's Street since 1676. Former clients include Winston Churchill, Admiral Horatio Nelson and Charlie Chaplin. Few institutions have stood the test of time so impressively but Lock & Co's longevity is testament to the quality of its products. Each of its Panama hats is made, according to tradition, from hand-woven

toquilla palm leaves, in Ecuador, before being shipped to the UK where it is shaped. The hat is then finished with a leather headband and black ribbon, originally introduced as a sign of mourning for the death of Queen Victoria. "The finest Panamas come from the town of Montecristi," says Lock & Co director Sue Simpson. "It can take up to three months to weave the body of the hat." £235. lockhatters.co.uk



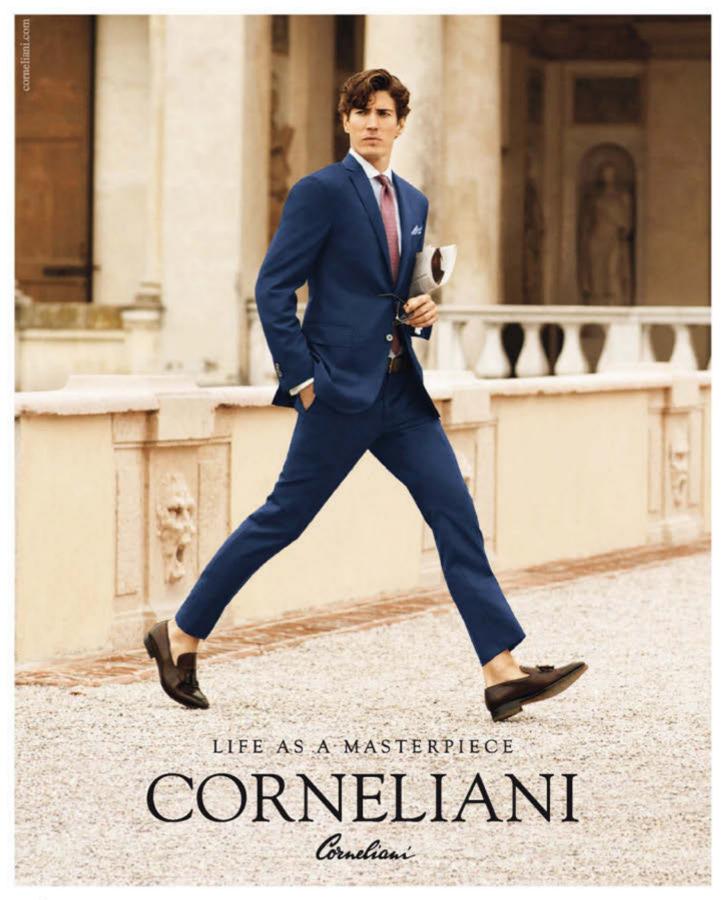
### THE PICKETT SCARF

### Worn by SIMON THURLEY

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ENGLISH HERITAGE

Self-proclaimed "English eccentric" Trevor Pickett founded his eponymous brand in 1988 and before long had become renowned for his fine, handmade leather goods. Pickett's luggage, made in Britain, is perhaps what the brand is most famous for but over the years its inventory has grown to include slippers, gloves, jewellery, umbrellas, games and, most popularly, scarves. Made from fine cashmere and silk, the ratio of which varies from scarf

to scarf, Pickett offers myriad colours, weaves and weights, ensuring that every eventuality, be it climatic or stylistic, is catered for. The diamond weave pashmina worn here is made entirely from cashmere, sumptuous and light, but resilient with it. "The unique diamond weave is designed to add strength to the lightweight fabric," says Pickett. "It will look crisp with any summer outfit." £95. pickett.co.uk



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### THE VALEXTRA PORTFOLIO

### Carried by ARNAUD BAMBERGER

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN CARTIER When he founded Valextra in 1937, Giovanni Fontana decided that his leather-goods company would make innovative "artefacts" for discerning clients. He used exotic skins, such as hippopotamus, elephant and sea lion to create bespoke pieces for clients including Maria Callas and Grace Kelly, both regular visitors to his boutique on Milan's Piazza San Babila. This custom service continues today, alongside an understated main line that

eschews branding in favour of letting the quality speak for itself. Valextra's lightweight portfolio is handmade using grain leather and traditional saddlery techniques, with rhodiumplated hardware. "Each of our products is hot-stamped with a serial number that identifies the leather used and the craftsman that realised the product," says company CEO Alessandra Bettari, "making it one-of-a-kind." £960. valextra.com







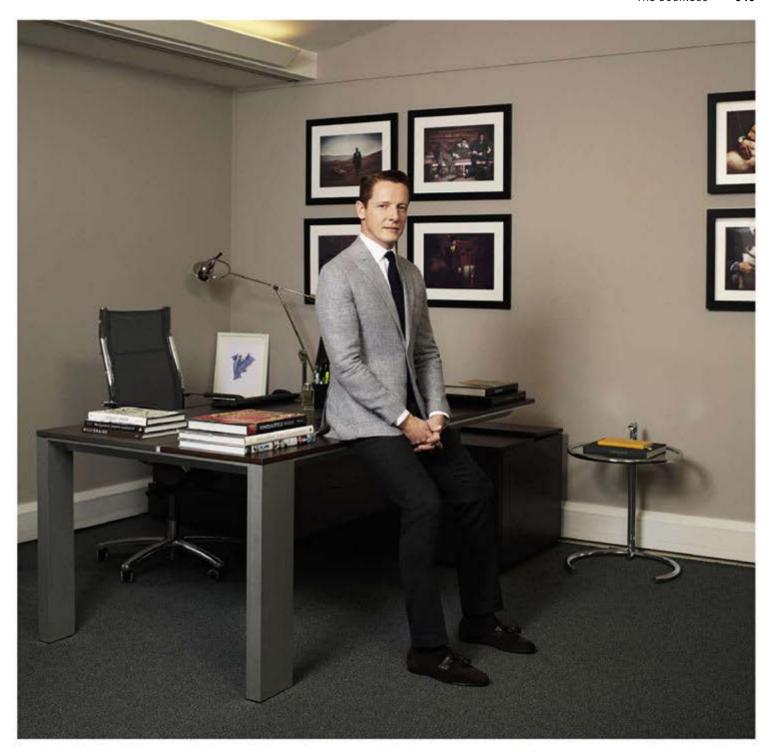
### THE THOMAS PINK LINEN SHIRT

### Worn by HUGH BRUNT

CONDUCTOR OF THE LONDON CONTEMPORARY ORCHESTRA

Thomas Pink was established 30 years ago by brothers James, Peter and John Mullen. The brand takes its name from an 18th-century Mayfair tailor, Mr Pink, who designed the red coat worn by members of a fox hunt. Despite their colour, these coats are known as "pink", in reference to their creator. These days, Thomas Pink is one of the most reliable names on London's esteemed Jermyn Street, crafting all its shirts to the same exacting

standards, while adding playful elements (their current collection was inspired by London themes, from Michael Caine to The Coach & Horses pub in Soho). This slim linen shirt features a soft collar and adjustable button cuffs. "We pre-wash them so they feel like an old friend," says creative director Florence Torrens. "It should be comfortable not stiff. Linen should look lived in and loved." £89. thomaspink.com



#### **THE HARDY AMIES JACKET**

#### Worn by **JASON BRODERICK**

FASHION DIRECTOR OF MENSWEAR HARRODS

Hardy Amies was as famous for his wit and style advice as he was for his design prowess, once remarking that, "A man should look as if he had bought his clothes with intelligence, put them on with care and then forgotten all about them." Thanks to the 2012 appointment of dapper design director Mehmet Ali, the Savile Row tailor's effortless style is still at the heart of the house today. Under Ali, Hardy Amies has created a series of outstanding

ready-to-wear collections, paying homage to the past while simultaneously keeping things modern. A good example of that combination is this peaked-lapel jacket from the S/S '15 collection, cut from fine cashmere in a light Prince of Wales check. "It's created with our signature 'unstructured' shoulder," says Ali, "so it will always look elegant while remaining cool in hotter climes."

£595. hardyamies.com



### THE E TAUTZ TROUSERS

### Worn by RUSSELL NORMAN

RESTAURATEUR

E Tautz was one of London's foremost makers of breeches and sporting wear until a fire in 1898 forced the family business to close. The name was purchased in 1968 by Savile Row's Norton & Sons, which was itself taken over and revitalised by Patrick Grant in 2005.

E Tautz finally resurfaced in 2009 with its debut ready-to-wear collection. The focus is on craftsmanship, provenance and function, so the brand's clothes are made in England

using the best materials they can find. These 8.7oz selvedge chinos are made in a factory in Blackburn that has been crafting British Army apparel for more than 100 years. "Slimmed down, these trousers are cut higher at the back, lengthening the leg and covering the bum and underwear, but without the high-waisted look some people fear," says Grant. "You can't make them any better." £149. etautz.com

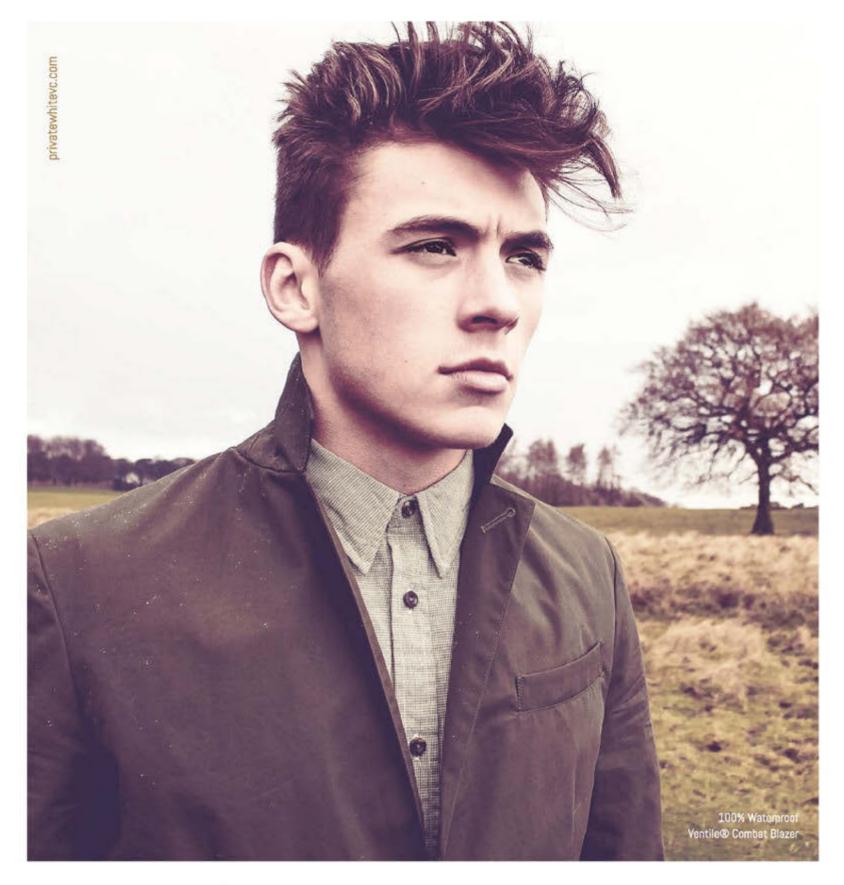


## 1946-2015

#### **OVER 60 YEARS OF HISTORY REVISITED**

The Heritage line represents the very essence of the TUDOR spirit and is the standard-bearer of its stylistic identity. Revisiting some of the most emblematic models in the history of the brand, it pays homage to its unique values and to more than six decades of rich heritage. The timekeepers in the Heritage line are not simply vintage re-issues. They are genuine reinterpretations in which past, present and future are combined. While retaining the original spirit, aesthetic codes and key characteristics of the historic models, TUDOR's Style Workshop places them at the very heart of the contemporary world, modernising them stylistically with small, subtle touches and adding new technical characteristics to optimise their performance. And so "tomorrow's icons" are born – modern classics, harmoniously combining form and function.







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### **LIMITED EDITIONS**

#### The very best in travel, interiors, clothes and accessories





**By Charlie Teasdale** 

### Giorgio Armani celebrates 40 years

Julian Kaye, Richard Gere's character in American Gigolo, was a renaissance man, or at least a renaissance male escort. He was cultured, tasteful, spoke six languages and was impeccably well-dressed. Famously, that last attribute was thanks to Giorgio Armani: the 1980 film was as much a springboard for the designer as it was for the actor.

"When I started my adventure in fashion," recalls Armani, "I had no real expectations, only a great passion and strong conviction I had something real and personal to say."

After studying medicine, completing military service and dropping out of university, Armani worked as a window dresser. He moved on to menswear sales, and by his mid-twenties was designing under Nino Cerruti. Jobs with Zegna and Loewe followed but by 1975, his own Giorgio Armani SpA was in business. The initial years were good but with Gere modelling his relaxed, billowy, boldly shaded tailoring to an audience of millions, things skyrocketed. Armani's designs offered a tonic to the trend for padded, boxy suiting and showed men (and women) that in order to look good, they needn't truss themselves up.

"Over the years, I have strived to create a lightweight suit. Not only in terms of tailoring, but also metaphorically speaking: a suit that follows the body's natural contours, with no stiffness. I think this is what men really want. And they want it more and more," Armani says.

As the decades have passed, "what men really want", has evolved, and Armani is right to claim influence. "I think I have played a role in this change. Men have gradually broken out of a rigid, conventional mould and forced dress code, discovering naturalness," he says. "Today, we are seeing the blending of formal wear with sportswear. We have been working in this direction for some time now."

It's not just tailoring he's been pioneering. For example, the current bomber jacket vogue can be traced to Armani: the first pieces he designed under his own name were bomber jackets. Today, the brand includes the ready-to-wear and Emporio lines, leather goods, watches, accessories, evewear, cosmetics, home interiors, hotels and even confectionery. In 2012, the annual revenue for Armani Group reached £1.67bn. This year, he celebrates 40 years in fashion. He is the most successful Italian designer ever.

Looking back through the seasons, you could take your pick for something that typifies Armani's methodology, but a raglan jacket from A/W '14 is as good as any. It's slim-cut, available in a range of colours and fabrics and comes in single or double-breasted form. But the real art lies in the freedom of movement afforded by the cut of the shoulders.

"Italians are naturally inclined to appreciate all things beautiful. They know how to be sensual and natural, and I certainly feel these aspects belong to my own style," Armani says. "I hope I have made an important contribution to creating a new kind of elegance, which is rational, comfortable and reasonable. Helping Italian fashion evolve and break away from its previous rules."

At 80, Giorgio Armani is still the sole shareholder of his company, worth more than £4.5bn and reportedly, his wardrobe in Milan is so big, it has 48 doors. An octogenarian, yes, but one who still stands at the thumping epicentre of international style, and clearly, one still enjoying his "adventure in fashion". ENDS armani.com

TOP: GIORGIO ARMANI AT WORK, 1979 RIGHT: A SKETCH OF THE ARMANI SUIT DESIGNED FOR RICHARD GERE TO WEAR IN AMERICAN GIGOLO (1980); AND ONE FOR LEONARDO DICAPRIO IN THE WOLF OF WALL STREET (2013)



**Limited Editions No. 02** 

### THE BAG MAKERS

By Teo van den Broeke

### City boys leave the day jobs to start world-class luxury luggage brand

In 2012, financiers Abel Samet and Samuel Bail took the drastic step of leaving their jobs in the City of London to found bag maker Troubadour. "We wanted to make a bag that was functional for us," says Samet, in his soft Boston burr. "A bag we could take to a work meeting that wasn't super-flashy and covered in logos. Then we wanted to take the same bag to travel to friends on the weekend. Very formal and structured, the goal was to create something functional for guys, designed for guys."

I meet the pair at their new store on Dover Street in London's Mayfair. The first thing that hits you about the space, formerly occupied by French cashmere brand Loft, is the soft, not unpleasant fug that hangs in the air. Bringing to mind the tanneries of Fes and Marrakech, the scent comes from the fats used to tan Troubadour's bags, and it's one that speaks of craftsmanship and care.

"All our bags are vegetable tanned," says Bail, who originally hails from Toronto. "They put the skin of a cow into a barrel with bark from South American trees, that turns for a couple of weeks and transforms the skin into leather. They then put a lot of oil into the hide, so if the leather gets scratched and you rub your finger over it, the scratches will disappear. That's because the oil will come to the surface. We don't put any finish on the leather, which is really unusual."

The luggage speaks for itself. The styling is understated: the muted hues of chocolate brown, midnight blue and charcoal are chic, while the shapes are solid and masculine. Each day bag is handcrafted in specialist factories: the idea being that to invest in a Troubadour bag for yourself is to invest in one for your grandson.







Where most companies will produce one or two prototypes before putting a bag into production, Bail and Samet will regularly make four or five working prototypes before they are fully satisfied with a design. It's an unusual level of perfectionism, and one that can be found at every stage of the production process, from tanning to stitching. "We found our tanneries and manufacturers at trade shows initially. And then we'd go to Italy and go see everybody," says Bail. "Once there we'd hear other names and see other tanneries, and consequently we spent a year-and-a-half driving around Italy. We got a real kick out of it. Now we have two tanneries we work with, one in Santa Croce in Italy and one near Madrid, Spain."

One of the most satisfying things about Troubadour's holdalls and briefcases are the hefty, military grade zips used to fasten them. There's a story behind these, too. "We source all our zippers from a husband and wife team in Brescia, northern Italy," Bail says. "They worked for a zipper manufacturer when they were younger and left to make zippers that were better than any they could find on the market. They went so far as to make their own machines to produce them."

Such tales of toil imbue each Troubadour bag with a sense of provenance, history and quality: three of the most important words in menswear. "A Troubadour is a storyteller," Bail says. "As a brand, we want to share the incredible stories of the suppliers we work with. I think that gives us a real uniqueness as a brand, and an authenticity that's very true to who we are and where we come from." ENDS troubadourgoods.com

TOP AND BOTTOM:
DAY BAG, £1,095;
RUCKSACK, £1,225,
BOTH BY TROUBADOUR
LEFT: ABEL SAMET
AND SAMUEL BAIL



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#### **Photographs by Christopher Hunt**



**Limited Editions No. 03** 

### THE PICK-ME-UP

**By Miranda Collinge** 

### An ex-model tells George Clooney to wake up and smell the coffee

How do you take your coffee? Stir-in granules with a touch of milk? A litre of latte with syrup? A fancy flat white from fair-trade, organic beans served by a young bearded man with sleeve tattoos? Each of these mugs represents one of the three "waves" of coffee culture that have washed over the nation, as we've become more sophisticated — and prolific — drinkers of the black stuff: according to the British Coffee Association, 79 per cent of UK consumers now drink it in some way.

We're also drinking more of it at home, mostly in instant form, but according to a 2014 Mintel report, almost half of coffee drinkers in the UK either have, or would like to have, a coffee pod machine. Until now, however, it has been difficult to replicate the full "third wave" coffee shop experience through pod machines. Which is where Cru Kafe comes in.

Cru Kafe is the brainchild of Norwegian former model Bodil Blain, who struck upon the idea of creating ethically sound and great tasting coffee capsules after she noticed a friend stuffing grounds into old Nespresso pods. "People are conscious of what they're drinking and where it's from," she says, sitting in the company's office in west London, "and companies that were not doing that needed to be challenged."

Nestlé – specifically its subsidiary Nespresso – is the company that dominates the capsule market, having patented the pod system in 1976. However, a series of legal rulings have lessened its chokehold, allowing other companies to produce capsules that are compatible with Nespresso machines without the risk of invalidating their warranties, or of the mechanisms being changed without prior notice.

Blain, along with three equally dynamic co-founders — chef and broadcaster John Quilter plus Canadian tech entrepreneurs Colin Pyle and Matt Heiman — launched Cru Kafe in December 2013 through a Kickstarter campaign (fronted by a video of them poking fun at Nespresso ambassador George Clooney). "We wanted to get 100, 150 customers to prove to our investors that we're filling a need, not just making something for the sake of it," says Pyle.

But Blain had other ideas. Her husband, Harry, runs London gallery Blain|Southern, and she decided to trial some espresso martinis there. One of the guinea pigs was a journalist with *The Sunday Times*, who subsequently published a piece about Cru (including a blind taste-test, which it won), and before they knew it, the enquiries were coming thick and fast. "I went to Norway in April," remembers Blain, "and Colin called me like, 'Oh Bodil! What have you done?' It was a barrage."

Cru Kafe offers five varieties of fair-trade coffee (organic certification is pending) in recyclable polypropylene capsules — light roast, dark roast, intense, Honduras and decaf — which can be bought in one-off batches or via a monthly subscription. The capsules come in nitrogenflushed packs of 12 (most other capsules are individually wrapped, meaning more wasteful packaging).

As well as online, you can find Cru's pods in every Soho House around the world, in the offices of Net-a-Porter, and on the shelves at Harrods. This year, Cru Kafe will also be launching a new single-origin Galapagos "Super-Pod": "being Scandinavian I call it a 'super-duper-duper-pod'," says Blain. "Everyone in the office makes fun of me." It certainly all sounds super-duper-duper to us. ENDS crukafe.com



BELIEVE IN POD: CRU KAFE FOUNDER BODIL BLAIN (TOP); A SELECTION OF CRU COFFEE PODS





LEFT: GROSSES CREVETTES SERVED ON AIR FRANCE, CREATED BY MICHELIN-STARRED CHEF GUY MARTIN



**Limited Editions No. 04** 

# THE UPGRADE

**By Simon Brooke** 

## The airlines scaling new heights of luxury

It's the big divide. When you board that long-haul flight do you turn left or right? Do you enter the living hell of economy or the promised land of business, even first class?

These days more of us will do the latter. Despite efforts by holiday companies to drive down travel costs post 2008, first-class air travel is enjoying a boom: it has doubled worldwide since 2005 and there are more than 86m first-class seats, up from 57.5m in 2005.

To capture this growing market, airlines are investing in new first-class cabins, seats and other amenities. Emirates has two fully equipped spas in its first-class cabin and is one of a number of airlines to offer passengers their own private suites with minibars and 2,000 TV channels. You also get pyjamas, use of a limousine, caviar and Dom Pérignon champagne. Last year, Air France unveiled its new La Première cabin, which has four exclusive individual suites.



LEFT: THE RESIDENCE BY ETIHAD FEATURES A FULLY STAFFED SUITE WITH AN ON-BOARD BUITER

ABOVE: EMIRATES' PREMIER SERVICE HAS NOT ONE BUT TWO SPAS IN ITS FIRST CLASS CABIN

Each guest has a personal 24in HD touchscreen TV, one of the largest ever seen on board. Contrasted with the technology are natural fabrics such as leather and suede. The bed is an impressive 2m x 1m across and there's a large table and ottoman to accommodate guests in your cabin. Qatar Airways, meanwhile, offers a menu created by Michelin starred-chefs including Tom Aikens and Nobu Matsuhisa.

Singapore Airlines Suites recently topped a Flightfox survey of the 24 best first-class cabins: a position they reached only after adjudicators had considered seat configuration, aisle access, suite privacy, whether pyjamas were provided and how the caviar was plated. Their best-priced first-class flight ticket is £2,215 (from Singapore to Mumbai) but for that you get a double bed option, an armchair hand-stitched by Italian craftsmen, Givenchy table-wear and Dom Pérignon, though this time from 2004: a vintage acclaimed for its great length and robust acidity.

When they come into service later this year, British Airways' futuristic new Boeing 787-900 Dreamliners will have what the airline describes as a "next generation" first-class cabin, with more space and comfier seats. Guests can also make use of the Concorde Room at Heathrow Terminal 5 and New York JFK, with the kind of luxurious furniture, chandeliers and artwork more usually found in five-star hotels.

But none of the above can match the heights of luxury reached by Etihad's The Residence, which launched in December. Designed for couples travelling together, it has been created by "leading interior designers and hospitality experts" and offers a three-room, fully staffed suite, a chauffeur to a private check-in and lounge, an on-board butler, a fine Italian Poltrona Frau leather sofa, two dinner tables plus a in-flight personal chef *and* a 59in widescreen TV.

"CEOs, celebrities and footballers have always gone first class but now we're seeing more people choosing it for a special occasion such as 25th wedding anniversaries or 50th birthdays," says Laurie Berryman, vice president of Emirates UK. "We've added first to our Manchester and Glasgow services and they've been very successful."

As first becomes even more luxurious it presents a whole new problem — that awful business of returning to real life. ENDS





TO THE POINT: CUTLER TREVOR ABLETT, 72, HANDMAKES HIS KNIVES FROM BRASS, STEEL, WOOD AND BONE SO THEY'LL WORK FOR A LIFETIME

**Limited Editions No. 05** 

### THE **OBJECT**

**By Richard Benson** 

#### Meet the last knifemaker in Sheffield

The renewed interest in old-school craftsmanship and earthy manual skills has created some curious new stars and scenarios this past 12 months. We have seen The New Yorker acclaim the agricultural style mag Modern Farmer as a publication of the moment; young bearded hipsters savouring real ales like old Camra diehards; and, at one festival last summer, the spectacle of Andy Weatherall DJing next to a woman showing the audience how to make vegetable dyes for their clothes. For spring 2015, we have a new hero: Trevor Ablett, 72, one of Sheffield's last artisan cutlers, hero to the new generation of craftfans and reinventor of the pocketknife as object of desire.

Based in a workshop near Sheffield United's Bramall Lane stadium, Ablett is the last independent cutler (a "Little Mester" as they are known in Sheffield) making pocketknives in a city long-famous for its steel and cutlery. His knives are handmade from brass, steel, wood, bone and horn and come in a few different styles of blade and handle - "Pruner", "Clip point", "Lambfoot", "Ettrick", "Farmers". They all have a blade hinged at one end, which is what makes them pocketknives (penknives have blades at both ends). The knives are also all made for



Photographs by Christopher Hunt

working. Ablett could make ornamental items for the lucrative collectors' market but, he says in his rich South Yorkshire accent, even when he was starting out as a 15-year-old in 1957, he "always liked the idea of what I made being used. If you use gold, silver and ivory, no one can use them. To make good-class, working knives that other people find useful makes me proud."

Ablett bats away questions about knife crime - "I've made tens of thousands for the Scouts and there wasn't a problem there" - pointing out he sells not only to people who might only sharpen pencils with them, but also to customers who use them for serious work, like gardeners and farmers. In the last two years, as fewer and fewer cutlers remain working in the city, Ablett has seen interest pick up, with new retailers and collectors ordering. People from all over Europe request to visit his workshop. Michael Portillo came recently and stayed all afternoon. Artisan woodturner Robin Wood, chairman of the Heritage Crafts Council, champions Ablett's "fantastic" work.

There is no doubting the solidity and robustness of the knives, their blades engraved with Ablett's name and the Sheffield Crest. A few years ago, a man drove to his workshop from Milton Keynes to show him an old pocketknife. The blade was somewhat worn but then, as the visitor explained, it had been used in the jungles of Borneo throughout World War II, and back at home in the six decades after. "I gave him a new one," Ablett says. "I like seeing them when they've had a lifetime of use. It makes me feel I'm doing something worthwhile." ENDS

Trevor Ablett's knives are available from steelcitycutlery.com







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**By Johnny Davis** 

#### Brunello Cucinelli's conscious capitalism

talian men enjoy a reputation for being the best-dressed in the world, and with some justification. In a country where the police uniforms are designed by Armani, unpolished shoes are frowned upon and a well-cut jacket is a must. It has been said that the objective to Italian dressing is not to blend in. But actually, the best Italians tread a line between self-expression and refinement. You notice them, but never in a bad way. There's a panache. A nonchalance. An *Italian-ness*.

"Fit is really important," Brunello Cucinelli tells me one afternoon. "You basically wear a sartorial [tailored] kind of top, a blazer and you pair it with some kind of sporty detail. In my case corduroy trousers."

Today, Cucinelli is wearing a fitted navy jacket, white cords, a crisp white shirt, a thin grey tie under a fine navy V-neck and polished

derbies showing at least four inches of sock. As always he looks immaculate but comfortable with it.

"Dressed like this I can go to university with friends, but if I remove my tie, I'm more sporting in style," he says. "It's this way of mixing and matching the elements."

What about colour, I wonder? Whereas British men often have wardrobes coughing with clothes, Italians typically spend less and know what suits them. They match two or three colours and tend to stick to a uniform.

"Navy, white, grey, brown," Cucinelli says, counting them off on his fingers. He eyes *The Big Black Book* photographer – a Swede – on the other side of his office. "For example! The way he's dressed."

Then the boyish 61-year-old is up and across the room, the blazer off his back and on to the photographer's, his hands darting here and there, tugging on my colleague's shirt and pulling the whole look together with a tailor's expert eye.



LEFT: BRUNELLO CUCINELLI IN HIS OFFICE. INSET: A TAILOR AT WORK

"Don't look at the green trousers!" he says. (In a tale he often tells, Cucinelli explains that when he was eight or nine years old and living as a peasant in the countryside, his mum gave him some green trousers for Christmas. He was so offended, he dug a hole and buried them in the garden and hasn't touched the colour since.)

That's not to say Cucinelli is averse to fashion risks. A basic tenet to Italian style is *sprezzatura*: a detail that's intentionally a bit off. One of his style heroes is Gianni Agnelli, the 99-per-cent-immaculate, late Fiat chairman who would wear his watch over his shirt cuff, forgo buttoning his button-down collar and fasten his tie so the thin end was longer than the thick. (Gilets over City suits and hiking boots under tailored trousers were two more Agnelli favourites that have

featured heavily in Cucinelli collections.)

"It's important to mix and match, to make you look beautiful," Cucinelli says. "Also, what you do with your hands is important. We tend to move our hands a lot because we've always been conquered by people, so we have to communicate like this. Otherwise, how would we be understood?"

With that it's back to the photographer.

"Sporty, chic, very youthful altogether, with the blazer," he approves. "Yes, he's thirtysomething and I'm 60, but if you hide my face" – he holds a folder in front of his head to demonstrate – "people will think I'm 30. This way of dressing is ageless."

This was the difference between style and fashion, I suggest. Style is forever, whereas fashion comes and goes.

"Exactly, yes," Cucinelli says. "We're not fashion as in 'coming and going'."

Brunello Cucinelli speaks about such matters with authority, as well he might.

For 37 years, his company has been producing some of the most luxurious and desirable clothing in the world, much of it cashmere and all of it handmade in Italy from a centuries-old base in Solomeo, a hilltop village in Umbria, a mountainous region two hours drive from Rome.

In 1985, Cucinelli began buying up and then restoring Solomeo's medieval centre where his fiancée (now wife) Federica Benda lived as a home for his business. He started by paying £100,000 for the 14th-century castle and today owns, or has helped renovate, almost everything else, from the meticulously restored

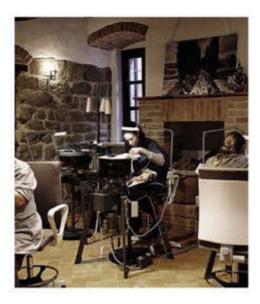
18th-century brick-and-stucco church to the 240-seat Cucinelli Theatre, inspired by two Renaissance landmarks: the Baroque Teatro Farnese in Parma, which gave us the modern playhouse, and Vincenzo Scamozzi's 16th-century Teatro all'Antica in Lombardy, the world's first free-standing theatre. It is part of Cucinelli's Forum of the Arts, a complex that also encompasses an amphitheatre; the Aurelian Neohumanistic Academy that hosts seminars on philosophy, history, architecture and spirituality; a vineyard; a library that's open to all with its grand piano and "precious texts" by Dante, Kafka, Rawls, Derrida and Proust; and a school of arts and crafts that teaches masonry, gardening, farming, tailoring and mending, with lodgings based on the ancient guild system. It's amazing, if a bit unnerving: in a country where you can't move for crumbling cathedrals, domes and buildings from the 12th century, this version is brand-spanking new.

Brunello Cucinelli donates 20 per cent of its profits to the Brunello Cucinelli Foundation, to be used "for humanity". Projects have included building a hospital in Malawi and the construction of a soccer field in his nearby hometown, Castel Rigone. He's rebuilt Solomeo's piazza, repaved streets and nurtured orchards. Thanks to Cucinelli, the town boasts one of the best provincial classical music festivals in all of Italy. When I visit, upcoming concerts include *Cantiones Sacrae* (Sacred Songs), featuring the acclaimed soprano Roberta Mameli.

As we are being shown around by Cucinelli's assistant, a woman so elegant and stylish you feel like bursting into tears every time she looks at you, there is evidence of the latest chapter in this 30-year development: builders hard at work on a private guest house to accommodate visitors who wish to linger longer. Below that is an even bigger enterprise Cucinelli has called "A Project for Beauty", the creation by 2016 of three parks totalling 215 acres. That involves the dismantling of an industrial settlement in order to return the land to its millenary nature: "Turning into a simple, rural garden, full of the colours, fragrances and sounds of nature," according to Cucinelli. "Preserving the territory in all its beauty and leaving behind lovely, harmonious places for those who will come after us."

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Solomeo is split into two levels, referred to by the inhabitants as "up there" and "down there". Below are the company's corporate



headquarters, a set of modern white buildings that includes the visual merchandising department and Cucinelli's own offices. Above is the old village where dozens of his workers are ensconced at tables in the renovated 14th-century castle with its arcadian views of cobbled streets, weaving fine Mongolian cashmere that's the USP of both the Brunello Cucinelli men's and women's lines. Rooms here are less like workstations or a production line than front rooms in a hamlet, flooded with natural light. (This set-up is big enough to make the sample collections and oversee quality control: most of his production is

farmed out to 2,500 satellite craftspeople in Umbria and Tuscany.)

"It feels like a sewing group at a house, rather than a factory," notes Cucinelli's assistant. "The feeling of a family life for everyone."

Cucinelli practises something he calls "conscious capitalism" or "a humanistic approach to luxury", meaning he's big on his workers' welfare. Since starting out as a one-man operation, he has expanded this quasi-medieval company town to 900 employees, a number that's doubled in the last five years. Almost all Solomeo's inhabitants now work for him. His employees earn 20 per cent more than their peers (an Italian factory worker typically earns £740 a month), and they all get a key to the premises. The place is empty by 6pm and a 90-minute lunch break is enforced. There's also a subsidised cafe where grilled meat, handmade pasta, *minestre* and wine are available, and a three-course meal costs  $\mathfrak{C}3$  (£2.20). Cucinelli dines with his staff.

"I believe in a humanist enterprise: business should comply in the noblest manner with all the rules of ethics that man has devised over the centuries," Cucinelli writes in *Solomei*, *AD MCCCXCI*, a hefty leather-bound volume, part-biography, part-treatise, gifted to Solomeo's visitors. "I dream about a form of modern capitalism with strong ancient roots, where profit is made without harm or offence to anyone, and part of it is set aside for initiatives that really make a difference in people's lives: services, schools, places of worship and cultural heritage. I believe in the quality and beauty of craftsmanship; I don't think you can have quality without humanity."

This is against a backdrop of economic freefall in Italy, where unemployment stands at 13 per cent. What's more, the country has a terrible reputation for ease of doing business — according to the World Bank Index, it comes 56th, below Armenia and Rwanda. But when the financial crash hit in 2008, Cucinelli made a pledge and stuck to it: he would lay off precisely no one. Even before that, during the explosion of yuppyism in the late Eighties, Cucinelli says that rather than look to the American super-managers for inspiration, his models were Socrates, Seneca, St Benedict and St Francis.

"I wanted to maintain a relationship with people," he says.

This humanistic approach is literally written on the walls in Solomeo, in the form of ceramic plaques quoting various Cucinelli inspirations, a sort of scholarly version of those laminated motivational posters you get by office photocopiers. "Love of knowledge echoes in our hearts and nourishes great thoughts," from Socrates. "When our

soul is full of feeling, our words are full of meaning," by Vauvenargues. "Behind every problem there's an opportunity," one of Galileo's. In Cucinelli's office the far wall is lined with framed pictures of his heroes, starting in the 13th Century with Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor and ending in the 21st with Steve Jobs. Indeed, it's almost impossible to get through any conversation, about anything, without Cucinelli invoking the words of one of the great social thinkers, Plato, say, or the Greek philosopher Xenophanes, or John Ruskin, who was apparently the inspiration for last spring/summer's advertising campaign. So often does the Emperor Hadrian pop up, it lead a previous interviewer to note you'd think Cucinelli had just seen him for lunch that day.

Still, scoff if you like: Cucinelli has lectured on business ethics and humanism at Harvard and MIT, while Bocconi University, in Milan, now teaches his socially-responsible business model. In 2011, the University of Perugia gave him an honorary degree in philosophy and ethics of human relations. The year before that, he was presented with the Italian Order of Merit for Labour, essentially a knighthood. The day after we meet, there's another big engagement: he's due to attend the grand opening of the restored Etruscan Arch, or Arch of Augustus, built in the third century and one of the symbols of Perugia. Cucinelli has donated over £700,000 to the project.

"Tomorrow the city is actually giving me a gift," he beams. "I'm being presented with the keys to the city."

accessible, Cucinelli is neither of these things. The clothes he makes are gorgeous, timeless, beyond such footling concerns as seasonal trends. They're also fantastically expensive. A cardigan can set you back £2,800, a blazer £5,000 and you could pick up a second car for the cost of one of his winter coats. His website currently advertises a pair of brown socks for £220.

Cucinelli has a couple of answers to this. One is that all his products are handmade here in Italy, using the very finest materials and artisans (who, remember, are paid appropriately). The second is that since his clothes are the best, you don't need to bother buying anything else. In fact, we could all do with buying a lot less, of everything.

"I like the idea of absolute luxury very much because otherwise I couldn't manufacture all my goods in Italy," he says. "It's true we are very expensive. But you should be able to understand the reason why it costs so much is because it's a lot of manual work, and I want to pay the right price, the fair price [to my workers]. I want to manufacturer something beautiful. And I like to have authentic things. I'm Italian: serve me spaghetti, seasoned with olive oil then Parmesan cheese. If you want to invite me for dinner, and you want to cook me the best meal, that's what I want. But, of course, the taste of the oil must be fantastic. The Parmesan must taste great."

He says he's kept the same pair of Ray-Bans for 35 years, the same Jaguar for 25. At school he always wore the same trousers: his mother

## Brunello Cucinelli proves success and kindness aren't mutually exclusive. He's a fashion designer — but also a man of the people

"He is a great asset to our local area," Andrea Romizi, the Mayor of Perugia, tells me. "Not just in terms of employment but also for the international recognition of a district that has to catch up to approach modern challenges, despite its heritage. Brunello has interpreted business in an extremely original manner: values such as respect for the human being and the community – considered so far marginal – have become his company's identifying features and strengths."

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Brunello Cucinelli proves that being successful and being kind are not mutually exclusive. He is a fashion designer as a man

of the people, then, in all aspects but one. And that's his clothes. Cucinelli operates in what he calls the "absolute-luxury" sector. If Gucci and Zegna are aspirational and Hugo Boss and Calvin Klein are

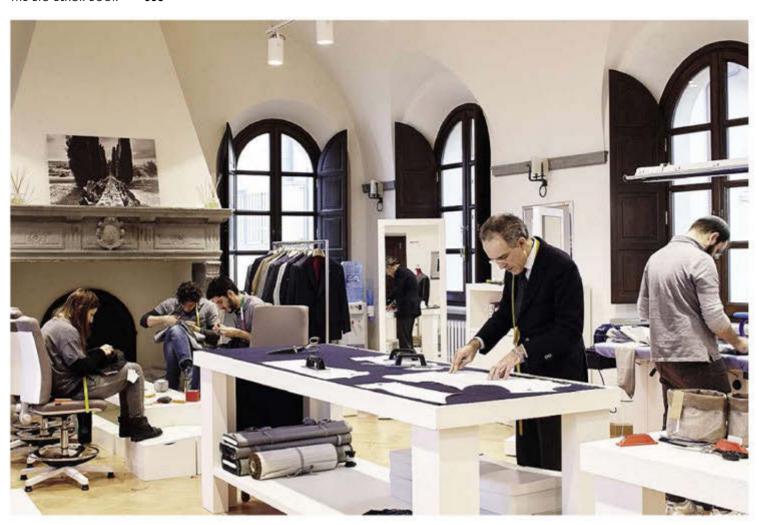


THE BRAND ESCHEWS MODERN FACTORIES FOR AN OLD-FASHIONED ENVIRONMENT would iron them every night. And anyway, he never said he wasn't a capitalist.

"What I want from the company is for it to make a healthy profit that is worthy of respect from mankind. Because you see, by the way, I will not buy anything if I know you make a preposterous profit from it. You do the right thing, the fair thing and then the rest comes on top of it. I'm convinced that in life you reap what you sow." (For the record, he says the shops' mark-up is seven times what it costs him to produce the clothes.)

Still, it's an odd message for a retailer. Buy less. But it's one he's sticking to.

"We are facing a new world," he insists.
"We have to go back to a better kind of relationship with things. It boils down to possessing better things, and maybe a lower number of things, too. You see, 'consuming' is not a nice word. Epicurus



said that every day you have to look after your soul, and that you have to use the things that the world provides you with: but you should not over-consume, because otherwise the world goes to waste."

Whatever Cucinelli thinks is right for the greater good of the world, it's possible the world isn't listening. Since the recession you might think £2,000 cashmere cardigans would be in for a tough time of it. In fact, Cucinelli's workforce can't weave them fast enough. He had already crafted a company with no debt, a £20m turnover and a solid trajectory when he went public in Milan in April 2012. Since the IPO, the brand has doubled in value, giving Cucinelli a net worth of at least £650m (\$1bn) according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index and making him one of the most successful

entrepreneurs in Italian history. In the first quarter of 2014, sales in America grew by 13 per cent, Europe by 16.5 per cent and China a whopping 26 per cent. (By contrast Italy was down 2.7 per cent.)



EACH SUIT TAKES 50 HOURS TO MAKE BY HAND

His preliminary results for the year ending 31 December 2014 suggest a net turnover of £263m. This is at a time of some uncertainty for the luxury sector, but perversely that may be exactly why Cucinelli is doing so well. He maintains that a cashmere sweater is the one item of clothing you're unlikely to throw away. Here he quotes Ruskin: "If it's beautiful and true it will be useful."

"I do not think the absolute luxury segment will encounter any difficulties in terms of sales," he told his staff in last year's company address, a copy of which you can find online. "There will always be someone wanting to buy, to purchase these special handcrafted products."

In a time of transparency, when there's little hiding from the consumer, when even the most trusted brands have been revealed to be tax-dodging sweatshop practitioners, Cucinelli's credentials may be everything. Or, in other words: he can continue to

command lofty prices, so long as his goods are rooted in artisanship. And artisanship requires artisans.

"So, we have to invest in these special hands that really manufacture, craft these products," he told his staff. And for that a nice canteen and decent working hours seem a small price to pay.

...

Cucinelli's rise is even more mind-boggling when you consider where he came from. He was raised by a family who lived off the land, cultivating sunflowers, corn and wheat and where 13 people slept under the same roof in a house that for years had no electricity or plumbing. At school, he was teased for his rural accent, called "peasant". When his family moved to the suburbs after his father "traded up" to a cement factory job, things didn't improve. Brunello says his dad was treated like "a slave". "It was difficult," he recalls. "That's why I work to foster human dignity. Because when you have experienced harshness, it drives you to change. My father, who is now 92, says, 'Do you want to be the richest guy in the cemetery?' And I say, 'That's not what I want.'"

Aged 12, Cucinelli briefly flirted with joining the priesthood, but after spending one night in a seminary decided he missed his parents and returned home. Having dropped out of university in 1975, his

A MASTER TAILOR TRAINS THE NEXT GENERATION OF CLOTHES MAKERS eureka moment came when he realised Benetton was making millions producing multicoloured Shetland wool jumpers for women, whereas cashmere was usually grey or black and reserved for men. With barely two lire to rub together, he charmed

his way into 20 kilos of white cashmere yarn, and brought pastel-coloured cashmere to the ladies market. His first run was of 53 sweaters. "I was forced to make people believe I had 72 employees. Often I would answer the telephone using voices of non-existent secretaries and factory workers. In fact, I was a one-man band." The jumper business only became a clothes business of "total looks" – trousers, shirts, coats, shoes, accessories – in 2000.

Now he's "the cashmere king", and worth as much as a real one. Did he treat himself after the IPO?

"Well, I wouldn't call it a special gift," he says. "What I was more intrigued by was to restore a church that I was fond of. Maybe if you ask me what was the best gift I ever *gave* someone? That was to my two daughters [Camila, 33, and Carolina, 24]. I gave them 1,000 books each. These are the best books of my life, the best 1,000. Because at the end of the day, a book is always going to be there. As Hadrian the Emperor used to say, 'Books lead you in life.' And when you are grown up, you understand that life has made you understand books."

And perhaps one day all this – the business, the village – will belong to his daughters, too?

"Well I hope so, but in life you cannot inherit anything. You only inherit ownership, not ability. Who knows? My father was a farmer and I'm an industrialist. So this is not something that worries me."

He has been asked before whether he harbours any political intentions. It's something Mayor Romizi doesn't rule out. "When journalists ask Brunello this question, he says he is happy with what he is doing, because he knows how to do it. However, he could have all it takes to start a successful political career, as he embodies both common sense and sensitivity. Last but not least, he has the ability to look beyond the present time to the future and beyond, to future generations — as shown by his recent 'Three Parks' project. These abilities are lacking in the ruling political class."

That would cap a remarkable ascent.

"When I started, I had absolutely no knowledge, no skills in life," Cucinelli says. "But you see this is the only job that I've ever tried and done. When you specialise in one single thing in life, you become more competent. It's been 37 years now, that I've been touching cashmere. In the end, you hone your skills."

It's surely more than that. By all accounts, he is extremely disciplined when it comes to business. Company meals have been an excuse to play video projections of speeches Martin Luther King and Charlie Chaplin in *The Great Dictator*. ("It's time now that people have to rediscover values," he says.) And he once called a staff meeting of 100 because two people didn't smell to his liking, and it was important that everyone got the message.

"I am a strict boss, yes," he agrees. "My nickname is 'The German'. I've always enjoyed rules. Rules are the same for everybody. But I'd like to quote St Benedict now, and he basically speaks to the abbot, the boss of the monastery, and he says: 'You should try and be strict and sweet.' A demanding master and a loving father."

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For all its global success, the brand remains surprisingly low-key. Yes, it's a favourite with the jet-set, even royals — Prince William wore a taupe Cucinelli sweater to cuddle up to Kate in those Mario Testino engagement photos — but outside of fashion circles it really isn't well-known. It turns out that's the way the boss likes it.

"Maybe tomorrow we should be slightly less known," he nods. "I would like to try and remain a bit more offside. My strategy has always been that of remaining smaller and growing slowly, but always maintaining the Made in Italy concept. Take a look at the way nature does it: everything follows suit and grows graciously."

This is what Cucinelli thinks: respect the land and nature, ply your trade with dignity and those values will in turn be passed on. Beautiful things really can make you a better person.

"I think that each and every one of us, regardless of their social class of belonging, you wear something more eagerly if you know it was manufactured without harming anyone. If you see something beautiful, it can be a beautiful sun, a beautiful object, you feel better. Emperor Hadrian said, 'I've never met anyone who did not feel better after being paid a compliment.' Also on our website, on the landing page, you'll see: "Beauty will save the world," by Dostoevsky."

Cucinelli is terrific company, and generous with his time. When it's time for him to go, the energy seems spirited out of the room with him. But go he must: from the windows of his office, we watch him striding across the quad, blazer buttoned, trousers skimming his legs just-so, phone pressed to his ear. He's off to have lunch with his stonemasons — to thank them for all their hard work. ENDS

brunellocucinelli.com









### Essentials No. 01 TOTE BAGS

Photographs by Sam Hofman





01 Giorgio Armani — £1,435 02 Michael Kors — £330 03 Boss — £700 04 Gucci — £1,810 05 Prada — £1,290 06 Aspinal of London — £295 07 Gieves & Hawkes — £1,195 08 Mulberry — £1,100 09 Alfred Dunhill — £690 10 Louis Vuitton — £2,610























01 Berluti – £1,350
02 Dior Homme – £1,000
03 Church's – £300
04 Gucci – £395
05 Grenson – £385
06 Paul Smith – £275
07 Tod's – £350
08 Gaziano & Girling – £990
09 JM Weston – £435
10 Crockett & Jones – £350











## THE GOOD ITALIANS

By Teo van den Broeke

## Six tailors worth seeking out

Illustrations by Kate Copeland





"CLOTH NEVER BEFORE AVAILABLE"

#### **CARUSO**

"A Caruso suit is the highest quality, both in terms of our components and labour," says Umberto Angeloni (above), CEO of the acclaimed menswear label. "As an example, the silk thread we use to make our buttonholes is so thin it requires 15in of thread for each one. Caruso also develops special categories of cloth never before available in men's clothing."

Raffaele Caruso launched his tailoring business in Naples in 1958, making suits for wealthy farmers and landowners. Though he started small (his first employees were his wife and sister-in-law), by the Seventies he was a major supplier in the third-party manufacturing of menswear. When Signor Angeloni came on board in 2008, Caruso employed 600 people and had a turnover of £440m. Now Caruso produces 1,000 made-to-measure suits and jackets a month. Defining factors include a full canvas construction and hand-finished details.

"A Caruso suit has the most evolved tailored fit or look," Angeloni says. "And nothing

less can be expected of a company that invests five per cent of its human talent in research and development [32 full-time staff], creating up to 4,000 prototypes of jackets per year, to capture that evolution required to adapt the suit's construction and silhouette to the changes in man's lifestyle, shape and taste."

Though suits remain its core, Caruso, has expanded into carefully crafted knitwear, outerwear and separates.

"In terms of pure style, Caruso designs and manufactures with only one customer in mind: the 'good Italian'," Angeloni says. "It's a term used by Ernest Hemingway to define a person with a superior sense of eclectic and fastidious elegance, the ability to detect originality and value, acquired through many generations as part of his natural lifestyle. Italians are, in fact, Caruso's best clients, and as long as we remain relevant to them, we can call ourselves authentically 'Italian' as a brand." carusomenswear.com



## **BOGLIOLI**

Boglioli excels in tailoring, specifically jackets. Defined by their soft shoulders, nipped waists and light weights, Boglioli's garment-dyed clothes have an understated aesthetic, which feels particularly relevant now.

"Boglioli's tailoring is ideal for men who want to remain unique, but with a conservative touch," says Jason Broderick, fashion director of menswear at Harrods. "The fit of the jackets embrace the body but don't strangle the wearer, giving freedom to move, resulting in a brilliantly styled silhouette."

Boglioli dates from the early 1900s when the family opened a men's tailors in Gambara, Lombardy. By the Seventies, their reputation for elegance found them in great demand producing garments for other houses. It repositioned as a standalone house again in the Nineties, producing suits, jackets and overcoats. Their defining moment came when Pierluigi Boglioli (above) took the structure out of their tailored jackets, resulting in what he called "dressed-down tailoring".

"We are constantly researching the fit, asking how many millimetres to take in or let out," says Pierluigi's brother, company president Mario Boglioli. "There's a constant dialogue between us and our customers." Bought by Italian private equity fund Wise in 2000, the brand has consolidated its reputation as a connoisseur's label of quality.

"Boglioli is the epitome of relaxed, stylish tailoring, typified by their 'Dover' jacket shape," says Sam Kershaw, a senior buyer at mrporter. com. "It is a brand with universal appeal: easy for an older consumer with more 'classic' leanings, but it does bolder colours and fabric choices for more adventurous shoppers, too." boglioli.it

#### RUBINACCI

Luca Rubinacci (right) is one of the great
Neapolitan peacocks, the man at the helm of
Rubinacci, founded by his grandfather Gennaro
in Naples in 1932. "He was considered an
arbiter elegantiarum," Luca says, "and young
men of good families would ask him to
accompany them to tailors and advise them
on the cut, fit and cloth of their wardrobes.
One day, Gennaro came up with the idea of
opening a gentlemen's club where his friends
could discuss cloth. Shortly after, he founded
the 'London House', now known as Rubinacci."

It is from this flagship London House

– named because Neapolitans considered

Gennaro's style to be inspired by the English
dandy – on Naples' Via Filangieri that

Rubinacci has sold its wares ever since.

With stores across the globe, its customer is every bit as international as Luca himself. Suits are cut from soft flannels, wools and silks in lively shades, while cuts are Neapolitan with a soft "mappina" shoulder (defined by a full sleeve and a high arm hole), a synched

waist – achieved, Rubinacci says, by "a front seam extended below the pocket to the bottom of the jacket" – and minimal construction.

Rubinacci also boasts an extraordinary archive of vintage fabrics. "If you are a cloth aficionado we have an enviable reputation for vintage cloth, built on my father's collection that I continued," Luca says. "We have more than 60,000m of vintage fabric [defined as pre-Eighties], mostly in storage in Naples but with a good amount viewable to customers in London."

If you're not yet in the market for a bespoke Rubinacci suit (average price is £3,400), the tailor is opening a new ready-to-wear store in Milan off Montenapoleone, in via del Gesù. "The new branch will have 400sq m of space where clients can talk about cloth and enjoy our ready-to-wear proposal. It's also defined by our cut, lightness and use of vintage fabrics."





"WE HELP ANY MAN BUILD HIS OWN STYLE"

## ISAIA

"When our customers experience Isaia for the first time, they are often blown away by the thought behind each detail," says Gianluca Isaia (left). "It is this passion that keeps them coming back."

Gianluca is the third generation of Isaias to helm the tailoring company, which is noted for mixing technology with tradition.

"The label was founded in Naples in the Twenties thanks to the intuition of my grandfather Enrico," he explains. "He opened a fabric store for the most renowned tailors in town. Later, he set up a small workshop next to the store where skilled craftsmen created tailor-made clothing for the highest-end clients. In 1957, brothers Enrico, Rosario and Corrado Isaia moved the business to Casalnuovo, a village near Naples where half of the residents were professional tailors. Within the decade, Isaia began producing some of the most sought-after garments in Italy. After that, the business grew internationally."

The key to Isaia's success may be the brand's modern take on traditional tailoring. Off-the-peg suits are cut slim and lapels are narrow, while the rest of the brand's offering feels young and approachable. Unlike many more traditional Neapolitan houses, Isaia has a distinct innovative streak which has helped it break into the international market, being stocked as far afield as Lane Crawford in Hong Kong, Neiman Marcus (USA) and Harrods (UK). "Our Aqua series of fabrics - part of our 'basics' programme is definitely not so 'basic'," Isaia says. "Combining the best in luxury fabrics with water-resistant technology, we have created the highest level of functionality and style."

Innovation aside, what else draws people to Isaia? "Our customers come to us for a full tailoring experience. Together with fun in fabrics, fit and models, we have the expertise to help any man build his own personal style," Gianluca says. isaia.it



## **MP DI MASSIMO PIOMBO**

Founding his company in 1989, Massimo Piombo (left) quickly established himself as a favourite of Milan's best-dressed men for his use of artisanal fabrics and bold colours. Trained in London, Scotland and France and based in Genoa, Piombo spent his formative years visiting factories across the globe sourcing the best cloths. "Our collections are developed with exclusive fabrics," says Carlo Alberto Piombo, sales manager for diffusion line MP di Massimo Piombo. "We use baby alpaca from Hungary, mohair from Austria, cashmere from Mongolia, linen from Ireland and silk from Lyon."

Overcoats and jackets are unstructured and slouchy with armholes cut high and sleeves narrow. This affords each garment a lean shape without compromising on comfort.

"MP di Massimo Piombo represents an idea which combines graceful design

and formality," Carlo says. "Rich with masculine accents and poetic visions, for essential garments that are versatile yet always impeccable, emphasised by a classic soul but revisited in a modern style"

Massimo Piombo speaks with equal clarity about the man he imagines wears his clothes. "[They are] envisaged and designed for beautiful people," he explains. "MP Piombo is a 'secret couture' concept for a sophisticated, original, classy, independent image which exalts character, class and individuality."

Produced in collaboration with
Neapolitan tailors Kiton, everything in the
collection is hand-made, with each button
sewn by hand. And, though the price point
is a notch higher than Piombo's main line,
you get what you pay for with this partnership
between two of Italy's most important
tailoring powerhouses.

mpmassimopiombo.com

#### **KITON**

A Neapolitan suit can customarily be identified by a soft shoulder, synched waist, wide lapel and bold hue, but suits produced by Neapolitan tailors Kiton break this tradition.

For six decades, the label has taken pride in immaculate garments handmade in the city's traditional way though minus what they deem Neapolitan flamboyance. "Ciro Paone, the founder, tried to create a handmade product 'made in Napoli', but looking as un-Neapolitan as possible," says Kiton's director, and Paone's nephew, Antonio De Matteis (right). "He tried to remove the excess, and make a Neapolitan jacket that didn't draw attention to itself."

Established by eighth-generation fabric merchant Paone and business manager Antonio Carola in 1956, the brand was originally Cipa before changing name to Kiton (after the Greek *chiton*, or tunic) eight years later. Today, the decades of experience are palpable in its clothing. Each of its suits takes 45 tailors a minimum 25 hours to create, with each part

cut and sewn by hand. Pockets are hand cut and stitched, a rare practice since each one takes up to an hour to complete (a machine can stitch maybe 400 pockets in the same time). Jackets are pressed using vintage irons and local spring water: there is little about their factory, 20 minutes northeast of Naples, that speaks of 21st-century "progress".

Suit fabrics are made by Kiton's own mill, Lanificio Carlo Barbera, in the Piedmont region of northern Italy. Ciro Paone started the company with just 20 tailors and it has grown every year since. Now it has its own tailoring school, taking in up to 14 students annually. They spend two years in the classroom, then two years as apprentices working with tailors. The company's motto is "Il meglio del meglio più uno" ("the best of the best, plus one").

"The suit is Kiton's business card,"

De Matteis says. "And Kiton is one of the few brands in the world that makes quality." ENDS kiton.it







Burlington Arcade - Unit 1/2, Burlington Arcade - London W1V 9AB - Tel: +44 207 499 6558

Fulham - 56 Fulham Road - London SW3 6HH - Tel: +44 207 589 8445

Covent Garden - 9 King Street - London WC2E 8HN - Tel: +44 207 836 8673

Regent Street - Shop 8A, 63 Regent Street - London W1B 4DY - Tel: +44 207 287 3075

Westfield - Unit 2030A (Village), Ariel Way - London W12 7GF - Tel: +44 208 743 9169

**WHAT** I'VE LEARNED

**BURT BACHARACH** 

Songwriter, 86

**Mr Bacharach?** Let's dispense with the formalities. It's Burt.

**Turtlenecks. Blazers.** It was almost like a uniform. I used to do concerts in a tuxedo but I don't know when I last wore one. I don't mean to put it down, it's just something that's not so important to me.

#### It'd be great if you had to take one year

in college, on a course called Relationships or Entering Marriage and you had to pass. I joke, but it's so much easier to get married than to get unmarried.

**I've never been a money counter.** But not having money makes me unhappy. It's nice to live in a comfortable house.

I can't play tennis now with my shoulders. Assorted injuries compromise. It doesn't feel good to hit a ball with a tennis racket but I have a small gym and I work out with a trainer. She comes three times a week, and twice a week I work out with a pool trainer who does different things where you have weights on your ankles and you run. No impact. I nurse that pool!

**If you're a musician**, do your work. Learn how to write down a piece of music. Then you can transcribe what you're hearing in your head.

When I was a kid, I would make sure that I'd turned off the gas jets in the kitchen and then check them four or five times. You have to get rid of stuff like that because your life can get into a form of paralysis.

I wouldn't get on a racehorse because they're so high-strung. I love them but some are not very kind. The attractive thing for me about owning racehorses is you're a custodian. They're very fragile animals; every day is another day that they're not coming up injured or dead. We went to the Kentucky Derby twice. Special moments. But it's a horse; it's not a piece of music you wrote. You just value the time. Say you have a horse that wins a big race. You're in the winner's circle having your picture taken with the jockey and whoever else is in your party. You're happy. The lesson is to stay in

the moment. Don't be asking your trainer, "Well, what do you think we'll do next?" It was hard enough to get to that moment, so enjoy it and don't hurry things along.

Always be thirsty for information.

#### I was born in Kansas City, Missouri.

That was because my dad had a job there in retail, at a store called Woolf Brothers. I left when I was one year old because we moved to the east coast. I've been back twice. Last time I found the house where I lived. It didn't hit an emotional chord.

#### A large part of my life has been about

not getting enough sleep, having the music going around in my mind. If you keep hearing something you were working on before you went to bed, maybe you have something. The bad news is that it's keeping you awake. I abused sleeping pills.

I believe in some order, some higher power, but I kind of made up my own religion. In retrospect, one of the things that turned me away from prayer was the first one I was taught by a German nanny. This was a long time ago. Basically it was, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, if I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take". I mean, what? How's that for scaring the shit out of a kid!

#### For a long while, I had a feeling of racing

against the clock. Getting as much done as possible. Running out of time. I've always thought that the best way to slow things down is get on an ocean liner and go on a cruise for five or six days.

**My wife is an athlete.** She doesn't want to be a singer. She doesn't want to be an actress. I like the way she takes care of her body. I think that's great.

Your country discovered me way before it happened for me in the States. The thing about England is the fact that even if you're down, they still hold you up and care about you. I liked being on tour last year and playing in Liverpool and asking if they were going to miss... who's the guy that was biting everyone? Luis Suárez! I'm playing

some more dates this summer. No bullshit, I think it's really great that somebody still wants me to do that.

**My parents got to see me win** a couple of Academy Awards and saw me in concert. You always wish they could see a little more.

**Every trip is important,** particularly now that travelling is a bitch. Somebody's getting married. They're friends of ours. OK, where's the wedding? Hawaii? No, count me out. I should be better about that.

You have to stay in touch with your muse. Touch the piano daily. I don't do that consistently but it's a rule of thumb.

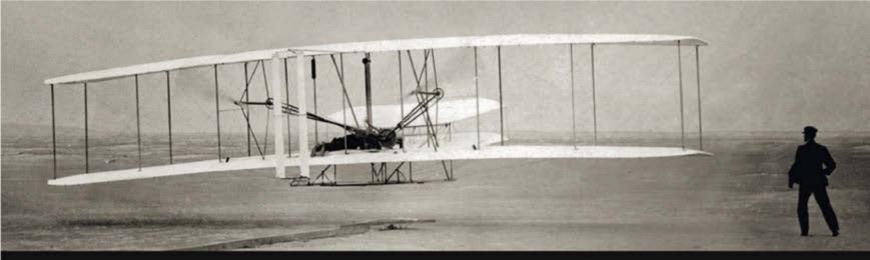
In my bathroom there's this mirror. I have all these notes, Post-its, that I've put up. One of them says, "Life is valuable". "Do not waste a day", that's another. Maybe five like that, and then a bigger one in the middle of the mirror that says, "Look at the other notes". Just a little reminder to check in and try to take nothing for granted.

Family's what counts. I have a daughter who is 19. It's been easy for me to be able to sit down and have a frank discussion with her. I don't ask about her sex life. That's off bounds. What's not off bounds is talking to her about pregnancy. My youngest son is 22. I hope that he doesn't knock up a girl.

I conducted for Marlene Dietrich. Years ago, I saw the world with her; I travelled to Russia when it was really terrible. The drive to perfection that I've had all my life, did I learn it from her? That's an interesting question that I'm posing for myself. Some of that came from Marlene. She wanted everything to be as perfect as possible. She said, "You want to get anything done, do it yourself. Don't depend on somebody else."

I try to stay accident-free. I'm not scared, just careful.

Will my music live forever? I'm surprised it's lived as long as it has! I'm not searching for an answer, but do I write as well now as I used to? Probably not. It takes me a long time. That hasn't changed. ENDS



Orville Wright taking first flight with brother Wilbur running alongside at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, 17 December 1903.

Image credit: WSU/planepix.com



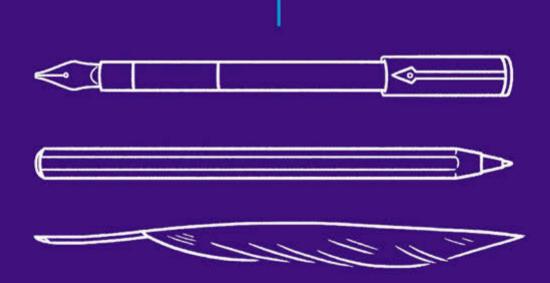
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## NOTES and ESSAYS

**Illustrations by Matt Blease** 



THE WIDE BOY
by ALAN HOLLINGHURST

HEROES
by GARY KEMP

MAKING
AN EXHIBITION
by VICTORIA BROACKES

CONVENTION
vs TRADITION
by ALEXANDER FURY

THE PHOTOGRAPH
by MICHAEL CHABON

FRINGE
by ALEXIS PETRIDIS

No. 01

## THE WIDE BOY

**HOLLINGHURST** 

## ALAN



"Has Nicholas got some other trousers?" my father asked, as we were getting ready to go for drinks at our

neighbours'. The question was too delicate for him to put directly to my school friend, who was staying for a week in the holidays after our A-levels, and whose clothes had created a certain tension in the house. In particular, his extremely tight-fitting trousers - a pair of honey cords and some faded blue jeans with large silver fly-buttons on the outside - brought two or three unmentionable things very close to the surface. Surely he must be as self-conscious about them as my parents were? A tone of strained forbearance was typical of their attitude to the clothes, shoes and hair of the young. In the tortured indirection of middle-class embarrassment, they even praised certain aspects of Nicholas' trousers - "Sort of elephant cord, I suppose, aren't they... mmm, rather a super colour?" - and made nervous jokes about his flares, focusing their interest well below the knee. But Nicholas, whose adolescent revolt was more ruthless than mine, only drew strength from the atmospheres he created. Twenty vears later, his trousers were all that anyone remembered about him.

To be a teenager in the late Sixties, then to find oneself ineluctably a young gay adult in the Seventies, in the high noon of tight trousers, was to be dizzied by male peacockery. There was an endless parade, as tormenting as it was exciting, of flaunted masculinity. Yet how paradoxically feminine it all was. Not only inch-thick soles but unisex clogs and high Cuban heels; not only the flowing and wandering locks that had crept, through the later Sixties, down the

neck and onto the shoulders, but hairdos, shapely, bouncing, bouffant; and then the trousers, which sought to emulate the length and elegance thought desirable in a woman's leg. They were elongated as far as was practical, the waists hoiked up to the navel, the lower cuffs extending downwards into shoe-concealing flares, which like the long pants of circus stilt-walkers might also disguise raised heels. And how flattering they were to the slender, and, of course, to the genuinely tall. The high tops might have a broad waistband like a sash a broad belt made a further, optional, emphasis on the flatness of stomach (some trousers, like some swimming trunks, had an inbuilt simulacrum of a belt).

From behind, the buttocks, though tightly covered, were oddly de-emphasised by the high waist and the plunging verticals of the design. In front, some unspoken agreement, some strange concurrence of the zeitgeist, had licensed display. The effects were sometimes blatant, often modest, and on occasion, by some imponderable deployment of underwear, as blankly unrevealing as an outfitter's mannequin, in the days before they, too, took on particulars.

None of this was very practical. Trouser pockets were a problem, since anything squeezed into them ruined the line. I remember some mushroom-pink cords with enormous patch pockets reaching half-way down the thigh, and framing the



crotch like chaps. Back pockets were fit for nothing thicker than a shopping-list, or (which one often saw) the tight-squeezed fingertips of a girlfriend's hand, as a couple strolled down the street. And if you were even a little overweight, the virtues of the design seemed to turn on you and define your shortcomings. There was no hiding place. The look showed the capacity of any but the simplest fashions to become very slightly grotesque. Even rock groups, whose photoshoots and album covers were galleries of trapped and squeezed genitalia, could look rather a sight.

To gaze now at old photos and archaic home movies of crowds on the King's Road from 1972 to 1975, is, of course, to see fashion dominant. The foppery of huge shirt collars and lapels that spread to the armpit; tight shirts with three buttons undone, necklaces and pendants; fabrics natural and very much not, velvet worn with rough denim, the sheen and crackle of synthetic fibres, unbreathing polyesters with their problematic odours; the abundance of colour, viridian, mustard, salmon, the gift to men of the open-minded Sixties, soon to be repressed by sterner fashion dogma. Past whale-backed Saabs and Triumph 2000s, they waft and strut down the road, dreamlike and a little ridiculous, showing off to a busy little strip of the world that is also showing off to them. And there at the bus stop, unnoticed, the old Chelsea couple who've dressed much the same for the past 40 years, and will always do so.

Of course, it came to an end, this period of uncomfortable, high maintenance display. It was slackened, diluted; the Eighties came with their different extravagances. From the following era of the loose and subfusc, it took on an improbable and ridiculous air, though one for which many must surely have felt a half-shameful nostalgia. Flares were quite quickly over – and I remember their passing in a curious way. My father, born in 1910, a country bank manager, wore suits to work and at home relaxed in grey flannels, or cavalry twill trousers that he called "slacks", but to me were the staidest thing imaginable. He had always thought flares absurd and "a bit pansy", and my own first

attempts to get hold of some had been as furtive and urgent as my first sexual quests. But at last, after years-long cajolement from me, he warily agreed to buy himself a new suit with trousers that broadened, just perceptibly, at the lower hem. The first time he wore them he might have been in drag, so unhappy did he feel. And already flares were finished, he picked up that message with a promptness never shown in any other sartorial matter, and within a month the suit had gone back to the shop to be straightened. It was another reminder, I suppose, that fashion is not for all. Alan Hollinghurst is a Booker Prize-winning novelist

# No. 02 CONVENTION vs TRADITION by ALEXANDER FURY



The tussle between tradition and convention in men's dress is an interesting battleground. Specifically when it comes to the tailored suit, in many minds both a bastion of tradition and a shackle of convention. Lots of military metaphor there. Because that's what menswear today is built on: a 19th-century foundation of rigid, regimented army tailoring governed with precision, differentiations of cut and finish denoting specific signifiers of rank. In turn, if we're ready to delve back into the history books, that's redolent of sumptuary laws:



legislation enacted by Renaissance monarchs to quash the sartorially extravagant amongst their subjects from pulling rank and file and, say, adding too much fur or too jaunty a codpiece to their doublet.

But today, I wonder, are convention and tradition inextricably bound? Not necessarily. Jean Paul Gaultier, for instance, founded his approach to menswear on respect for the former and conscious eschewing of the latter. Gaultier's jackets for him and her button left to right, bucking the convention of alternative hand fastening to differentiate between the sexes. In the Fifties, Christian Dior declared that, "in troubled times like ours, we must maintain these traditions, which are our luxury and the flower of our civilisation." But no mention of convention and, to the man whose 1947 womenswear debut, dubbed "the New Look", flouted perceived post-war notions of femininity, it's likely convention meant squat.

That's not just a weird piece of fashion pop trivia I happen to have embedded in my skull: Kris Van Assche wrote it on a bit of paper placed on every seat at the Tennis Club de Paris for his spring/summer Dior Homme show last June. "There's something very, *very* restraining about the suit," Van Assche told me, "which is so not how we actually live... One of my big projects since I got here [Dior] is loosening up the rigid frame of the suit. It's about gaining in movement, without losing in elegance." Look at it another way: it's about ditching convention while preserving tradition.

That's a difficult balancing act. How easy it is to "Frankenstein" together a suit

from a mish-mash of elements you think make it feel "modern," and end up with an ungainly monster. Rules are made to be broken, ostensibly. But I'm not sure how true that should be. It's not just designers who run the risk. I recently had my first (and, given my ever-precarious financial state, possibly only) bespoke suit made. The choices were, in short, overwhelming: first the cloth, then the fit, the buttons, lapels. Questions of jetted versus patch versus flap — those being the type of jacket pockets — let alone placement, nor number. And let's not even think about the trousers.

I moaned a bit about the bewilderment I experienced to the great Antony Price, tailor of choice to men like Bryan Ferry (generally acknowledged as one of the best-dressed men in the world) and Simon Le Bon (who, frankly, isn't, but whose Price suits were still pretty sharp). In the brilliantly blunt manner that is his trademark, Price's reply hit the nail on the head. "People want it off a shop rail," he guffed – 'it' meaning their next outfit, for him or for her – "then they know it's good. If you make it for them, they don't trust it." Or, perhaps, they don't trust themselves. I know I don't.

The Price was, as always, right.
But it got me to thinking. Was I afraid of offending tradition, or convention? I'm not much tethered to ideas of left or right buttoning. But there's still a fear of offending accepted ideas, of transgressing. Perhaps it comes from school uniforms, from the idea of pushing your sartorial individuality as far as possible, but expecting at any point to be rapped on the knuckles and jerked back into line.

Honestly, I was afraid of making an expensive pig's ear of a Savile Row silk purse. Which is why, sometimes, it's better to let someone else transgress on your behalf. Carlo Brandelli, who heads the tailor Kilgour, has always focussed attention on paring, minimising and in turn modernising the suit. His business there is built on bespoke, meaning men have to actually want to dress in the reductionist fashion he champions, which slices off superfluous details and hones everything down to the bare minimum. He chopped off the "French and Stanbury" from the "Kilgour, French

and Stanbury" label when he first joined in 2003. After leaving in 2009, he returned last year following a five-year stint focussing on sculpture. There's something sculptural about what he does at Kilgour, carving into the block of the suit jacket rather than merely tinkering prettily with gewgaws on the surface like a Pompier painter.

Brandelli bemoans that there have been hardly any real innovations in contemporary tailoring. His battlefield is the lapel, where there are only three conventions on offer: peak, notch or shawl. Brandelli proposes alternatives, notching shawls and seaming everything together like a tailored rendition of Nike's go-faster tick. They're all painstakingly made, in the traditional manner. But there's nothing conventional about them.

If you're clever about tailoring, as either a designer or a customer, you'll use tradition to create something unconventional. Personally, I think the best at that is the American Thom Browne. He reminds me of a naughty schoolboy tugging and twisting his uniform to make it his own (although few uniforms are as finely-wrought as Browne's). "It took about two years for people to realise I was wearing something I wanted to wear and not just something that didn't fit," he says today, sporting one of his trademark suits shrunken a good couple of inches above wrists and ankles. "People get angry when they see me on the streets sometimes... they think that they're supposed to understand it but they don't understand it at all."

That's the lure of convention, for the masses: it's something everyone can understand. It doesn't rock the boat. But in fashion – for me, and maybe for you, and certainly for designers – it's something to thumb your nose at. That's something British men have been doing for centuries, right back to the 18th, when aristocrats cast off silk and velvet in favour of hunting pink barathea wool and sturdy tailoring. Flouting convention is, ironically, a menswear tradition. And one that must be maintained. By the professionals, at least. Alexander Fury is Fashion Editor of The Independent

## No. 03 HEROES by GARY KEMP



I've always thought about what I wear and I worry about

what I wear. Even if I'm just putting on a T-shirt and jeans, I'm thinking about the look. I've never gone towards being super-flamboyant or outrageous but I don't like to be boring or conventional, either. It's all about the cut. I can fall in love with a man's suit quite easily. When I go out with my wife, instead of staring at other women and being told off for that, I'll get reprimanded for staring at jackets or a pocket square. I admire the guys who just wear suits but I think there are one or two other looks that you can put together throughout the day. I wear suits mostly in the evening, something that throws a nice silhouette. That's important.

I've just bought my first tweed suit, which I'm struggling with slightly. I've got a house in the country as well as living in London. There's that saying, "No brown in town," so I'm never quite sure where I should be wearing it or what I should be wearing it with because I'm quite fussy about that.

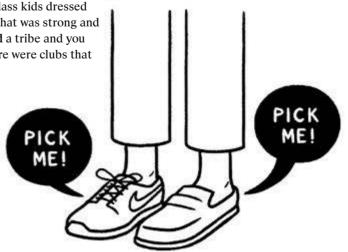
Why I became part of that evolutionary lineage of youth culture and why we ended up at the Blitz Club in Covent Garden when it was our turn — and created what became known as the New Romantic thing — was that generally working-class kids dressed up to define an identity that was strong and powerful. You had to find a tribe and you had to go to a place. There were clubs that

scenes revolved around. I was hugely eclectic and dabbled in all of it so if I was a soul boy, I'd go to Crackers just off Oxford Street. I'd have to wear the right thin belt, the Smith's jeans or the plastic sandals. Some symbol that said, "I'm on your team." You had to be on the street to show off, of course you did. I remember hanging out in Soho in the late Seventies with my big trousers and blousy shirts. Clothes are not as important now as they used to be because you can find your identity by designing your front page on Facebook or whatever it might be.

Whether it's a chair or trousers, I like well-designed things but you must be careful because buying clothes can become an addiction. I'm slightly furious with clothes shops now, the way they only put small sizes out. They look great on the rack but when you put them on they're not right for you. Quite often I'll buy something because I like it on the peg. In my keenness, I'll take it home and then it's too late. My local Oxfam is full of wonderful stuff if you want to go and have look down Marylebone.

With Spandau Ballet, at the beginning no one could afford clothes so we did what everyone else was doing, which was going to thrift stores and getting a certain nostalgic look together. I drew a pair of what I considered to be very cool trousers on a piece of paper and my mum made them on her sewing machine. Then there were all these other kids at Saint Martins making us clothes, like Stephen Jones who did our hats. It was a very creative circle of friends.

Things rapidly became high street. We'd invent looks with, say, pie crust



shirts or jodhpurs and suddenly they'd be in Topshop, or Princess Diana would be wearing them. Then it was time to move on.

After that, men's couture happened. There was a store called Bazaar which opened on South Molton Street. That was the first place I knew that sold the new designers like Yohji Yamamoto and Gaultier and Comme des Garçons. There had never been high fashion for men that was also a little bit wild and that became the mid-Eighties look. You'd say to someone, "Your jacket's done up on the wrong button." They'd reply, "No, no, no. The shop assistant told me that's how it was worn on the catwalk." It sounds hysterical, but clothes are really badly judged when vou look back at them because they're out of context. They're never fashion mistakes at the time. At least it was daring. You'd rarely get a pop star who looked like Ed Sheeran, dressing like your dad. You'd rarely get a kid who looked like Ed Sheeran. Everything's just so conservative now.

Trainers or shoes? That question pops up in my head a lot. There are guys that do trainers well and then there are others who wouldn't go near them. I'm always wondering which kind of guy I am. Is this a day where I wear trainers? Maybe it is. Or do I wear a low-cut loafer that's not too heavy? But you never quite feel as comfortable as you would if you were wearing trainers. Does that sound pathetic? Obviously it does. I've shown myself to be the vain fool that I am.

People ask me, "Do you ever regret wearing this or that?" *Fuck no*. I'm pissed off about the lack of sartorial adventure among the younger generation. If you can't go wild in your teens and twenties, then when can you? You certainly can't be wild when you're doing the school run. You need some theatre on stage, especially if you're playing big venues. Recently, I've been wearing Burberry linen trousers that are quite short with no socks. Show a bit of ankle. These groups that are anti-fashion, I find it all rather disappointing. If Bowie ever went on stage looking like he didn't care I would have cried.

Gary Kemp is Spandau Ballet's guitarist/ songwriter and an actor No. 04

## THE PHOTOGRAPH

by

## MICHAEL CHABON

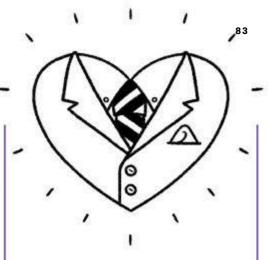
Among the many things I took for granted about the publication of my first novel, in 1988, when I was 23 and in the business of taking everything for granted, was the question of what to wear when posing for the jacket photo. The occasion, I thought, clearly called for a suit and tie.

I owned one suit. It was navy



The photographer was a man named Jerry Bauer (d. 2010). I knew the name well. Along with those of Jill Krementz and Dominique Nabokov it appeared frequently beneath or running up the side of author photos on the rear flaps and back covers of books. Having my picture taken by the man who had photographed Samuel Beckett and Gore Vidal was just one more thing to take for granted, along with having it taken in a suit.

If I were a woman – as so often when the question of what to wear arises – the



answer would have been less clear. In an earlier era, women writers had tended to pose for their book jackets looking like ladies of the club: their hair set, their cheeks powdered, wearing a boat-neck collar with a string of pearls, or a sweater set, or a dress of watered silk. Sometime in the late Sixties, however, with the loosening of conventions both in society and in photographic portraiture (and with a concomitant loosening of stays) you began to see women writers posing in everyday attire: a flowing print blouse, a turtleneck with a macrame vest.

But if you were a male author in that time – even with your big bushy sideburns and your collar-length hair and your newly-liberated sexuality on full display in the stacked heels of your Florsheims you were likely to wear a suit. Sure, you could do the cardigan with shawl collar and leather buttons, if that was your thing, or pose looking professorial in tweed jacket and tie, or in foul-weather gear on the deck of a yacht (borrowed, no doubt, for the occasion). One saw photos of Montana writers in chambray shirts, and literary lumberjacks in flannel. Mostly, though, it was suits, two- or three-piece, square-cut and Wall Street, or tapered and continental: John Updike looking lean and rangy in grey worsted; Saul Bellow looking gravely ironic in rock-solid Hart Schaffner Marx; Tom Wolfe and his signature white three-piece, even after a decade or more of anti-Establishment tumult and shifting definitions of masculine and feminine.

"Is that what you want to wear?" Jerry Bauer said, when I met him in the lobby of my hotel. It was, by far, the most posh hotel I had ever stayed in, newly renovated, with a telephone and a television in the bathroom, and fresh flowers in a vase on the coffee table, and a fully-stocked minibar which I was apparently free to

deplete. At first, its splendour had astonished me but by the next morning I was already taking it for granted; the syrup on my room-service pancakes had not been 100 per cent pure maple. "A suit?"

He seemed genuinely disappointed, to an extent that I would have been hesitant to express to someone I had met less than a minute earlier. He was a small man festooned with serious cameras, wearing a heavy winter coat. I nodded and followed him, at his invitation, out through the splendid marble lobby to the sidewalk. I was rattled, a condition far from uncommon among people who take too much for granted.

"That's a very nice suit," Jerry Bauer said. It so happened that he was correct, but it sounded like he was lying. "Navy blue, all right. Very beautiful, over a very nice pinstripe shirt. And what do you call that kind of tie, the pattern? A rep tie, is that it? And that's what you want to wear? You're sure?"

"Is it OK?" I asked him.

"Of course," he said. "It's fine. You look very nice. I don't know why, I just wouldn't have put you down as a suit kind of guy. You don't look like a suit kind of guy. I just want to be sure it's really you, that's all."

I was not, of course, a suit kind of guy, as far as I or anybody knew. This afternoon in the late winter of 1988 was likely the third, perhaps the fourth time in my life that I had worn a suit.

"This is me," I assured him. "I love to wear suits."

I have bought a number of suits since then, including my current and all-time favourite, a medium-grey cashmere, by Shipley & Halmos, patterned a subtle glen plaid in darker grey. I got it on clearance at Barneys in San Francisco for less than a quarter of the original price. Like a lot of Shipley & Halmos' clothes, the cut is narrow and just a little bit mod, to keep me from getting stodgy. The wool travels well — wrinkles fall out overnight in a hotel closet — and feels so marvellously soft that when people reach to steer me in the right direction or give me a hug their fingers tend to linger momentarily, involuntarily,

on my shoulder or my arm. And even though suits require extra care in packing, and sometimes when you're on the road selling your book for two or three weeks at a stretch you just want to show up for the Librarians' Breakfast in your plaid pyjama bottoms and your Sword T-shirt, a suit is the only garment in which I truly feel comfortable while I'm doing the public part of my job.

That morning, on a sidewalk in Midtown Manhattan, shivering in my tropical-weight suit because Jerry Bauer said that the camel coat I had bought specially for the occasion would "do weird things with the light", I discovered that I hated posing for photographers more than I hated almost anything else I had ever been asked to do. Writers, by definition, are people who like to be alone. We don't want to be observed; we want to observe others. We don't want to think about how we must look; we want to think about how the world looks when we aren't around.

But in my suit, although I was freezing (I can see how cold I look in the picture) I felt strangely protected, or maybe it would be more accurate to say that I took refuge in that suit. A suit is a uniform, the uniform of workers in abstractions, ideas, language – bankers, stockbrokers, lawyers, or professors. And a man in a uniform, like a writer researching a story, courts invisibility. In my blue wedding suit, even with a camera pointed relentlessly at me, I was concealed, rendered unremarkable. I blended in with the mass of men all around me, making their way to the public part of their jobs as I was doing the public part of mine. I could pass - or at least I felt that I could pass – as a member of Arnie's world of work and sleep and cocktails and golf, a world that contained big cheerful men like Arnie, men who bore no ill will to anyone and went around the house whistling and paid their debts and found ready places in their hearts for newcomers to their families. Thus disguised I would have my picture taken and emerge from the ordeal with my soul, that sphere as bright and pitted with shadow as a moon, intact. Jerry Bauer was getting nothing out of me. Michael Chabon is a Pulitzer prize-winning novelist and scriptwriter

# No. 05 MAKING AN EXHIBITION by VICTORIA

**BROACKES** 



A lot of people don't appreciate the history of the V&A: that

it's connected with the Royal College, and art and design training. It was really set up as a place to inspire practising designers to create contemporary objects. But being called the Victoria & Albert Museum, people think, "Oh, it's 19th century." When we put on exhibitions like Kylie Minogue: Image Of A Pop Star (2007), The Story Of The Supremes (2008) and David Bowie Is (2013), people still raised their eyebrows. We anticipated that with David Bowie: we came fully armed and prepared for it. But it didn't really become an issue at all. I hope that's because we bring the same rigour and new ideas and scholarship to the more pop-culture subjects we cover. The thing with Bowie was we could draw on our collections to illustrate his own interests and associations with many artistic schools from German expressionism to William Burroughs. It's true these more "popular" exhibitions have become more of a thing recently: Schiaparelli And Prada: Impossible Conversations (2012) and Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty (2011) at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, the latter is now at the V&A. It's a good way of doing fashion, in the same way you might do an artist: you follow through a subject. But I do feel the V&A is better placed than any other museum in the world to do subjects that are thematic, and bring objects together from our in-house collections, and more. We have a Theatre & Performance department in the museum that's been collecting music memorabilia



with a design angle since the Sixties, because pop stars employ designers to create their visual identity. I don't think many decorative art museums have that. The museum has realised that these subjects have a breadth and reach that brings new audiences and touches people's lives, and they are also hugely successful, a really good thing all round.

When you stage an exhibition, you're often dealing with a subject your audience feels absolutely passionate about. They know a huge amount. So one approaches those subjects with humility. I am never going to know the second guitar string that was broken on a recording when a particular album was being laid down... but there are people who do know that. The challenge is that we have to cater for the person who knows almost everything and the person who knows almost nothing, and bring something interesting to both those people. As an example, there was an interview with Bowie where he talks about one of the Ziggy jumpsuits he wore on The Old Grey Whistle Test. He said, "I had those jumpsuits made by Freddie Burretti in Liberty fabric..." Then he corrects himself and says, "Actually, it probably wasn't Liberty fabric, it was probably from Berwick Street Market: I wasn't that upmarket in those days." Then I got this letter in from somebody with a swatch of fabric: "Actually, it was Liberty fabric because I bought it as well. And here's a photo of me wearing the dress I'd made from it." So our exhibitions tend to be quite collaborative. Somebody saw the exhibition in Chicago and noticed a photo from our own collections of Elvis, who was an influence on Bowie. Famously, Elvis never came to London, but on his way from Germany to America in 1960 he stopped and gave a short press conference in Prestwick airport. They wrote in and said,

"Your photo wasn't the press conference in Prestwick because the microphone is the one he used in Germany." It's a modern phenomenon to be able to bring that sharing of knowledge. You can't be annoyed by it. That's absolutely right they do that, and we amended our records accordingly.

Bowie was one of the very few people we wanted to cover in a single exhibition. The problem was knowing where all the clothes and memorabilia were. And then it turned out he had it! From his financial manager we discovered he had this fantastic collection: it wasn't just costumes he'd bought back over the years at auction and famous photos, things you might expect. It was going back to teenage drawings, and ideas for Ziggy Stardust sketched in notebooks. I can remember exactly where I was when it happened. They said, "Would vou be interested?" I said, "I don't need to consult anyone else in the museum to say 'yes'." Then I felt a bit sick because you don't do anything without consulting 10 people at least twice. I wish I could say we knew he was about to make a music comeback, too. I knew something big was happening because I'd heard people associated with him saying that something might be happening around his birthday. Then one morning I woke up to Bowie music, and grown men sobbing. The BBC was going berserk. I thought: "Oh my God, he's died."

I'm working on a new exhibition for 2016. It's on the late Sixties and it won't feature one single artist but it will have music running through it. More than any other era music it really represented what was going on around it. And that was a kind of revolution. So that's what the working title's based around. What takes the time is finding out where the material is, and getting in touch with people. The pressure's on! It's incredibly disappointing if you don't get something, or something's been promised to another museum. With The Story Of The Supremes, all the costumes belonged to Mary Wilson, the only member who went all the way through to 1977. She made a joke about it: "I didn't get anything else, but I did keep the frocks."

You learn every time you do an exhibition what works and what doesn't.

There's a bit of a catchphrase at the moment about the "emotional space" between the object and viewer. Because it's not really about the object, it's in how you communicate to the person looking at it. There was a lot of discussion about where to place the gold hot pants in the Kylie exhibition. We put them at the end of the first room, before you went into the performance area. That's the "holy relic" end. In Bowie, we had this tissue with lipstick on, from Ziggy. God knows how he's hung on to that. We had a lot of debate about whether we should have it or not. It was a bit tongue-in-cheek. Victoria Broackes works as head of exhibitions for the V&A Department of Theatre & Performance

No. 06

# FRINGE by ALEXIS PETRIDIS



It's not entirely clear to me where my obsession with what the Americans call "bangs" started. I suspect it was something to do with a black-and-white photo of The Velvet Underground's guitarist, Sterling Morrison, that I must have seen in my early teens. You never hear that much about him: he was very much the George Harrison of the band, crowded out of the picture by Lou Reed, John Cale, Nico and Andy Warhol. But there was a point, about mid-1966, when Sterling Morrison looked like the coolest human being on Earth:

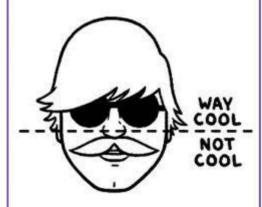
engineer boots, black jeans, black turtleneck sweater, and, especially, a huge fringe sweeping over black sunglasses. You can see it in Nat Finkelstein's mid-Sixties shots of Warhol's Factory and its denizens. Morrison's never the focus of any of them, surrounded as he is either by astonishingly beautiful women - not all of them female - like Nico or Edie Sedgwick or Candy Darling, or by people who just look bizarre, the bewigged Warhol among them. But somehow, lurking in the background, slightly out of focus, he manages to exude a kind of impenetrable insouciance and hauteur. He looks like nothing would phase him. If someone had walked in the room with a monkey, and the monkey had not only started talking, but summarised the arguments put forward in Kierkegaard's Either/Or, Morrison might conceivably have raised one eyebrow a little, but you'd never have known, because his fringe covered his eyebrows. At 15, fazed by everything and under the impression that insouciance and hauteur were places you went on French exchange, I decided that was how I wanted to look.

I'm not sure why Sterling Morrison in 1966 struck me then, and strikes me to this day, as the absolute embodiment of rock'n'roll cool, rather than the usual names that append themselves to that title, like Keith Richards, Elvis or Jimi Hendrix. It's not as if you could even argue he held the role for very long. At some point in 1967, he made the catastrophic decision to grow a droopy moustache and blew it: he started looking like the medieval English literature student he had been before he joined the Velvets and would become again when they broke up.

I suspect it might have been compounded by the fact that by mid-1966, men in rock bands were really starting to put the hours in when it came to their personal appearance – they were exquisitely primped, draped in paisley and satin and extravagant hats – and Sterling Morrison clearly wasn't making any real effort at all: this was not a guy with an account at a shop in Carnaby Street, or whatever New York's equivalent of Carnaby Street was. He looked like he wasn't trying, he looked like he didn't give a fuck, which meant that his coolness was somehow innate, it hadn't been bought in. Somewhere in my mind, his haircut must

have come to embody that, perhaps because - as I quickly learned, while attempting to do things like learn to drive, or sit my GCSEs with 75 per cent of my vision obscured by hair – growing your fringe over your eyes was a quite spectacularly impractical way to wear your hair. It suggests a certain bohemian contempt for the humdrum and the mundane. There's something decadent about it, as if you're deliberately retreating from the everyday, cutting yourself off like the guy in Huysmans' À rebours, hiding out behind a kind of tonsorial wall. Less pretentiously, it confers a degree of emotional impenetrability on its owner because no one can actually see what's happening with the top of your face.

All these things appealed to me enormously, but after a few years, the fringe started to wear me down a little. Perhaps



revealing a certain lack of commitment to life on the bohemian margins, I found myself craving the petty bourgeois comfort of being able to see what I was doing. In addition, there were moments when the degree of insouciant cool the haircut was supposed to confer upon me was severely compromised, not least when I was forced to sit my A-levels with my hair held back from my face using my mother's kirby grips. Besides, I'd started going out to raves, where, in fairness, no one cared what you looked like - such are the effects of prodigious ecstasy intake - but I nevertheless started to feel a bit out of place rocking a haircut locked in the mid-Sixties. I had a crop, and cropped – at various lengths - my hair stayed for the next 20 years or so.

But the idea of the thick, impractical fringe as a kind of ultimate men's hairstyle, a cut that comes with all kinds of intriguing resonances attached, stayed with me. You

often put your teenage obsessions to one side as you grow up, becoming increasingly mortified by what you thought and liked and wore, but I've still never seen anyone that I think looks cooler than that photo of Sterling Morrison. Eventually, I decided to grow it out again, intrigued as to what it would look like flecked with grey. To my horror, it wouldn't grow, or at least not in the way it once had: the fringe was weirdly threadbare. It's hard to know these days exactly when one becomes middle-aged - we do such a good job of putting it off, of blurring whatever boundaries used to exist between youth and adulthood – but this was definitely a pointer to the fact it was happening to me. I couldn't do what I wanted with my hair any more, just as one day, I would look at myself in a pair of skinny jeans and find the words "Oh, for Christ's sake" involuntarily springing to my lips, and the realisation that some clothes were now just too young for me slowly dawning.

Perhaps, I consoled myself, it was for the best. Perhaps, like skinny jeans, the thick fringe was a young man's game, one of the things you have to give up in exchange for what you might call the consolations of middle age. You no longer have to have a haircut that you think makes you look like you don't give a fuck, because you've got to a point in life where you genuinely don't give a fuck any more, at least about things that don't really matter: Twitterstorms and other forms of howling online opprobrium; music, films, books or telly that you're not particularly interested in, despite the fact that you've read somewhere that "everyone" is talking about them; the kind of articles that claim that "everyone" is doing something when they're patently not; social events that you don't really want to go to but would previously have felt obliged to attend etc. And yet, there's still a small part of me that feels a twinge when I see a kid walking around with that kind of latter-day thick fringe, swept over to one side in a style pioneered by Justin Bieber. Look, I feel like saying, that haircut self-evidently took you hours to sculpt and gallons of product to keep it in place – it's meant to look like you don't care. You're doing it all wrong. ENDS Alexis Petridis is The Guardian's head rock and pop critic and Esquire's music editor



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Photographs by Sam Hofman



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## INTO THE **BLUE**

By John-Michael O'Sullivan

Giò Ponti's Mediterranean masterpiece



Photographs by **Christoffer Rudquist**  THE TERRACE RESTAURANT AT THE FRONT OF THE PARCO DEI PRINCIPI HOTEL TAKES IN EXPANSIVE VIEWS ACROSS THE GULF OF NAPLES; SIXTIES FURNISHINGS IN TRADEMARK "AZZURRO" TONES IN THE LOBBY (RIGHT)





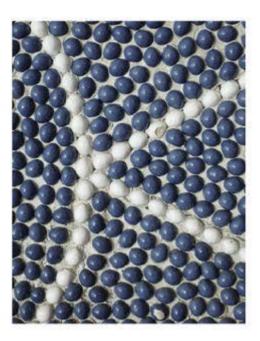


Some words just don't translate. Like "azzurro" — a cocktail of fizzy Italian z's and rolling r's that English deflates into the flatter, infinitely less evocative "bright blue". And on the pitted, stone cliffs of Campania, bright blue just doesn't cut it — not for the luminous, midsummer shade the Mediterranean makes when it collides with the blurred horizon. Azzurro just says it better. And it was azzurro that inspired architect Giò Ponti's exquisite, late-career masterpiece, Sorrento's Parco dei Principi Hotel. Writing in Domus, the seminal design magazine he founded and edited for 12 years, Ponti waxed lyrical about the site's "cielo azzurro, mare azzurro, isole azzurre, maioliche azzurre" (blue skies, blue seas, blue islands, blue tiles).

Ever since the days of the Grand Tour, travellers had been making their way to this stretch of Mediterranean coastline, where the Bay of Naples' vast curve sweeps outwards and upwards, into the Amalfi Coast's tumble of sunbaked ramparts groaning with lemon trees and







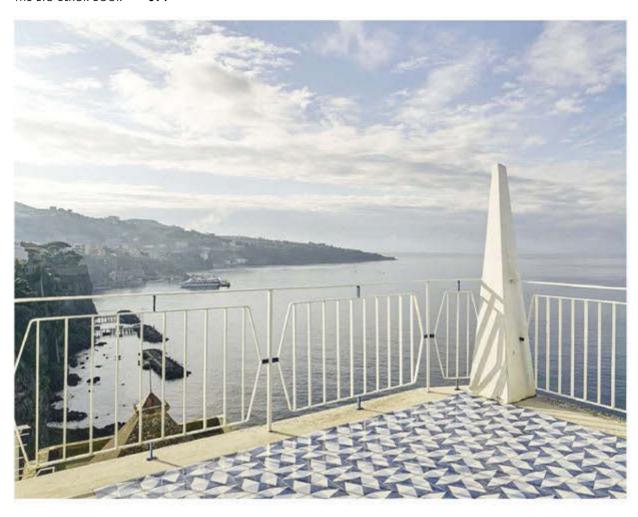
FROM TOP LEFT: EMBOSSED CERAMICS BY SCULPTOR FAUSTO MELOTTI IN THE LOUNGE BAR; THE MEDITERRANEAN BLUE/WHITE THEME EXTENDS THROUGHOUT THE CORRIDORS; DETAIL OF THE CERAMIC PEBBLES SPECIALLY DESIGNED BY GIO PONTI; THE MOSAIC AND TILED RECEPTION AREA

THE REAR ASPECT OF THE PARCO ENJOYS VIEWS INTO THE VERDANT, TRANQUIL THREE-HECTARE BOTANICAL GARDENS (BELOW)



olive groves. Over the centuries, Byron, Keats, Goethe, Ibsen and Gorky all came, saw and rhapsodised. But in the Fifties, the blossoming of the tourist industry started to draw a sophisticated international crowd southwards, away from the grand watering holes and genteel resorts of previous generations. This new breed had a shiny new name, the jet set, and they were looking for fun, pure and simple. They found it in and around Sorrento, at Capri and Ischia, in Ravello and Positano. And an enterprising Neapolitan engineer, Roberto Fernandes, grabbed the opportunity to welcome this brave new world in style.

The property Fernandes bought had long been a place of privileged pleasure; originally a Jesuit Estate, it was commandeered by the King of Naples, who wanted to rid the court of a scandalous cousin. The cousin - Paolo Leopoldo, Count of Syracuse - planted the site with lush botanical gardens, and built the biscuit-walled palazzo that still stands further along the cliff. A century later, an aristocratic Russian family took over, building a dacha shaped like a Gothic castle that would never be completed. So the site came crowded with memories and artefacts – which Ponti, promptly and characteristically, ignored. Riding high off the success of his other masterpiece, Milan's soaring Pirelli Tower, he was at the height of his success and fame. But where the Pirelli epitomised Northern Italy's full-throttled economic regeneration, the Parco dei Principi would embody a very different Southern renaissance. Rising out of the crumbling ruins of the dacha in crisp white folds, the building glows with mid-century selfconfidence, its gleaming tiers facing towards the lumpy profiles of Capri, Ischia and Procida. Zig-zagging stairs race down the 50m cliffs to the sunlounger-lined jetty below. And above, past the stark whiteand-glass facade, lies a submarine wonderland - cool, quirky, whimsical, equal parts Jetson and Flintstone. Downstairs, the walls are coated with high-gloss, clay-coated pebbles or panelled in ceramic

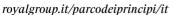


RIGHT AND BELOW:
THE PRIVATE SEA-VIEW
BALCONY OF A
JUNIOR SUITE; THE
ORIGINAL MINIMALIST
FITTINGS REMAIN
IN EVERY BEDROOM
ALONG WITH TILES
CUSTOM-DESIGNED
BY GIO PONTI

disdainfully about its "clashy Formica-clad furnishings". But rather than succumbing to change, the hotel simply slid quietly out of fashion. Roberto Fernandes' descendants have looked after it carefully, preserving its original Cassina furniture and quirky details. Starting in the late Nineties, a loving, decade-long restoration kept the hotel's gleefully vibrant spirit alive. Today, rediscovered by a new generation of design obsessives, Ponti's breezy design has come into its own.

It's a glorious, one-of-a-kind exception. For some reason, modern design and luxury travel never really got on. There are precious few great hotels from the mid-century period; most of what was built catered for the package-deal brigade, not the jet set. There are only a few, isolated, spectacular exceptions: the recently restored, Morris Lapidus-designed Fontainebleau in Miami; Arne Jacobsen's austerely elegant SAS Royal in Copenhagen, now largely lost to repeated "improvements"; and Verner Panton's terrifyingly psychedelic Hotel Alexandra in Copenhagen.

But the Parco dei Principi has soldiered on, the very definition of a period piece: defiantly and delightedly of its time. Each room still remains a perfect flat-pack box of Mediterranean heaven: white walls, geometric floors, and glass framing an uninterrupted wash of *azzurro* sea and sky. And it's good to know that there's a little corner of Campania that will be forever 1962; where Formica headboards and checkerboard floors remain the height of fashion, where it's always cocktail hour by the quirky, amoebic pool, and where – after dark, on the terrace, at least in spirit – Monica Vitti and Sylva Koscina are always doing the twist. ENDS







## THE SECRET OF SCENT

By Jon Savage

### What does a nose know?

Dressed in a sharp white shirt, Francis Kurkdjian is sitting in his fourth-floor office on Rue Etienne Marcel in Paris on a sunny winter afternoon. On the table in front of us are a dozen different coloured bottles and beside them a rack of exquisitely folded paper scent-tasters. An eloquent and expressive interviewee, Kurkdjian is enjoying the performance: just as his perfumes transform chemistry into alchemy, so does his talk bestow coherence and compelling metaphor to a notoriously slippery topic.

He is speaking, in excellent English, about his one-off commissions: the ideas that keep him creative and stimulated. One which piqued his interest was from the distinguished French installation artist Sophie Calle to create a scent for money. "I was inspired by the idea that money doesn't smell, but also money laundering. And from the smell of a one-dollar bill. The ink and the paper of the US bill is special, like a cooked rice, a chiffon type of paper. And then you have the kind of dirty, leathery scent, on the back."

I sniff the paper-taster. It smells fresh, metallic and slightly harsh: not at all comforting. It's the correct response. Kurkdjian smiles and then asks, "You want to smell the Marie Antoinette?" This is another of his one-offs, to recreate the scent worn by the infamous wife of King Louis XVI — beheaded four years into the French Revolution — who remains a talismanic figure in contemporary France.

"That was for work I did for the castle of Versailles," Kurkdjian remembers. "We found the archive of the castle, in the Parisian library, [and] the box of one of the perfumers, she had many suppliers. She was commissioning the perfumers to create perfumes for her. And the idea was to recreate the formula in the same way. It smells like an infusion of flowers. The process was like finding a new score for music, and you try to understand what are the instruments, and you try to manufacture the instruments, and try to mix them and play them together."

The scent from the taster explodes into my nose: sweet with a tang, overwhelming and powerful, I tell Kurkdjian, and ask what the constituents are. "Iris, orange flower and roses. I have facsimiles of the formulas from the early 18th century. The scent is super-big at the beginning and then, because it's natural, fades quickly. At the time, people applying perfume through the day. Even different perfumes."

"You know where the name comes from, eau de toilette? Toilette comes from toile [linen cloth]. During the 18th century, there were no dedicated bathrooms. You had your bath in the bedroom, or even dining room. For royalty in France, you could set up, *mettre la table*, in your bedroom, in the corridor. To clean yourself in the morning, you would take a table, like a Louis XV commode, and on top of it, you would put the canvas cloth, la toile, to protect it. Eau de toilette was the liquid you would put on top of the toile, to clean yourself."

Perfume is the way Kurkdjian sees the world. "I am passionate

about communicating the way I work," he says, "and trying to step outside of the clichés. Is it chemistry? Am I a chemist? The work of the perfumer in future is going to be more artistry. Now you are encapsulated in the commercial bottle you have to sell, but you have to step back from the artistry and make it communicable."

...

At 45, Kurkdjian is near the height of his powers: driven, charismatic, innovative, a rock'n'roll perfumer. Of French/Armenian stock and born and raised in Paris, he embodies the city's chic and sophistication, yet at the same time a restless innovator. "In France, perfume is a conservative industry," he says. "People will put you in a box. I do a lot of business in Britain, with Burberry, as they are more open."

The cosmetics market is huge, with sales more than £8bn in the UK during 2013 (fragrances alone accounted for £1.35bn). During the last 20 years, there has been a massive expansion in male fragrances, driven both by celebrity products — Jay Z's 2013 Gold Jay Z, for example — and an increasing sophistication within the market, as men use scents not just for grooming but as an expression of personal style. A top perfume can sell 10 million bottles but success is hard to predict, so the industry oscillates between tradition and innovation.

The power of the nose can be shown by the difference between visual recall (50 per cent) and scent recall (65 per cent). It is an underestimated Trojan horse in the array of senses. To be a successful perfumer, it helps to have flair, good training and a track record. As Kurkdjian says, "When someone asks me how long it takes to create a perfume, I say 20 years, because you need 20 years experience."

After studying at post-graduate fragrance school ISIPCA in Versailles, Francis worked with leading fragrance producer Quest International. After two years, in 1995, he originated a scent for Jean Paul Gaultier called Le Male, sold in a blue, male torso bottle with ribs mirroring Gaultier's trademark matelot sweaters. It made his name.

Since then, he has created scents for major brands as diverse as Acqua Di Parma, Dior, Elizabeth Arden, Guerlain, Armani, Joop!, Lanvin, Versace and Yves Saint Laurent. He is currently working on "seven brands, and among those, 15 different scents. It's like shooting two movies. But one project relaxes me from the other, because they're different. It's a creative process, so you can't switch off your brain."

"I don't have weekends," he admits. So how does he relax? "A project can relax you. Relaxing is about being happy. It's a state of mind which is close to happiness. If I go to a concert, to opera or to modern music or whatever, your brain is thinking and sometimes you just grab a word and get an idea for a perfume. So, even if you want to relax... for me, right now, 2015 is planned, over; 2016 is almost over,

#### Photographs by Adrien Toubiana

I'm thinking about the end of 2016, end of 2017."

I ask him how it works. Perfume, after all, is an intangible item that's not a Versailles necessity. It's not just about the scent, but about the hopes and dreams that the bottle and the packaging evoke: most obviously, in the heroic fantasies of perfume advertisements.

Kurkdjian is pragmatic. "My work is to write a perfume," he says, "in the same way you write a book. What I really do first is find a subject, whether it is for my own brand, or someone else's. Once I have my pitch, I start to think about it, and from my ideas, I am capable to turn that into a scent. The whole process, materialising the process is writing down the formula, that goes to the lab, I don't have anything to do there. It comes back to me in the form of a little sample."

"Then if what I have in the bottle matches the olfactory image I have in my mind, then I'm done and I'm happy," he says. "What matters to me is the emotion. The feeling of something that doesn't exist. Perfume is a feeling. If you tell people that there's lavender or rosemary in the bottle – even if at some point they can recognise each scent – they'll likely be totally incapable of saying what it is going to smell like as a result. But

if I give you the idea that we're on the beach, there is white sand, blue sea, an umbrella, a little chair, a coffee table on three legs, a glass, I can describe everything to you and you can start thinking where we are. The problem with perfume is like explaining to someone that violet is made up of blue and red. It's obscure, in a way. This is why there are so many clichés about what I do, how we create, the world of perfumery, because it is hard to understand. If I give images, it is very simple."

"Which is also why I decided to teach," he adds. "It helped me so much to explain to kids. When you teach, you have to find the right words, to conceptualise what you are was doing. You have to find images, when they come from a different background, you have to be able to talk to them. I have to find a common language."

This is difficult, because, as to some extent with music, perfume is difficult to write about. There are the concepts of notes and accents, but the olfactory response, while enormously powerful, is hard to transcribe into words. Kurkdjian understands this difficulty. "We are trained with visuals," he says. "No one teaches you to name sounds, or it is very basic, and with tastes and scent, forget it."



PERFUMER FRANCIS KURKDJIAN IN PARIS

Nevertheless, as a child and adolescent who was immersed in music and ballet, he is fascinated by the relationship of music and perfume: "Both have the same vehicle, or medium, which is air. The air vibrates and carries the music and the scent is carried by the moving air. If you are in a static environment, even if the source is very smelly, a strong scent, if the airflow is going backwards, you won't smell anything."

So perfume, like music, is environmental? "Yes, because you have to occupy the space, the way that music fills a room. This is where I find a very strong relation with music. It's an argument I have with a friend who is a music composer, when I say I am a perfume composer, he says, 'Why do you use a word that belongs to music?' In French, we make the distinction between writing, painting, composing music, but for perfume there is not a proper language. The reason is that it's only 150 years old, which is nothing compared to visual art or music."

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Look at old ads for Seventies' scents and you'll see a hilarious array accentuating the grooming aspect, sporty associations (Royal

Copenhagen's Ultra Men's Cologne, Pfizer's Hai Karate) as well as blatant machismo. Faberge's Macho aftershave came with the tag line, "Macho. It's b-a-a-a-d" in a bottle with an undeniably phallic shape. This was the era of Aramis, Brut, Old Spice, what fragrance expert Lila Das Gupta calls "the fragrance Bermuda Triangle of the Seventies".

During the Eighties, fragrances slowly became more sophisticated: new scents were introduced into the classic floral, oriental and woody families, like the Ozonic fragrances of Davidoff's Cool Water and Christian Dior's Dune. Since the advent of the metrosexual in the mid-Nineties, men's scents have become less a necessity than a sophisticated source of pleasure, as men, to some considerable extent, have been target-marketed in the same way as women, with subtle psychological appeals to their desires and fantasies.

Fragrance, like music, is distilled emotion. "Exactly, that's correct," Kurkdjian agrees. "In my process, what matters to me is the emotion

of the scene, and then that feeling is turned into something concrete. If I need jasmine, I'll be using jasmine, if not, whatever is appropriate to me. Not so long ago, I heard on the radio about a composer who was obsessed with steam locomotives, and his idea was to translate into the music the feeling he had, being in a steam engine. He started with the feeling, and translated it into sound, using his materials. I do the same."

The process of making fragrances is both highly technical, involving ingredients that might include complicated synthetic compounds calculated to the most minute degree, and highly subjective if not instinctive: how is it that a tiny change in the ingredients creates a winner from a dud? It's a kind of alchemy and it's hard not to see Kurkdjian as a magician.

In 2009, he founded Maison Francis Kurkdjian with business partner Marc Chaya, opening a Paris shop on Rue d'Alger. On its

website there is a handwritten motto from Kurkdjian: "Perfume as a work of art is an expression of intimacy." Maison Francis Kurkdjian offers three scents each for men and women, Masculin and Feminin Pluriel, Amyris Homme and Femme, APOM Homme and Femme, as well as two eau de toilettes, "fragrances to share", Aqua Universalis and Aqua Vitae. There are also the colognes Pour Le Matin and Pour Le Soir, a scent called Oud in "silk", "velvet" and "cashmere" moods plus perfumed candles, fabric softeners, and *papier encens* (incense paper).

Back at the table, it's been a while since we've had a sniff, so Kurkdjian offers me another taster of a dark-tinted liquid, Aqua Universalis. It's a scent from his own house and the smell is so overwhelming it's like being high, the same massive stimulus to the sensory system.

"The scent is one of our best sellers, one of the unisex scents," he explains. "Very fresh and crisp. The inspiration was to recreate the modern haute cologne, which was started in the early 18th century, and

it was drinkable. It was 100 per cent natural, composed with rosemary, thyme, orange flower, orange blossom, lavender, and people used to drink it for a digestive effect. You would have huge celebrities, like Napoleon, drinking cologne. I like that inside-out effect, that you would ingest something, like the good thing inside, to bring the good thing outside.

"I started to think about that Latin sentence, *mens sana in corpore sano* ['a sound mind in a sound body', Juvenal, *The Satires*], and this is how the 'universal water' became Aqua Universalis. It's trying to capture the scent of the feeling of cleanness. It's spring, airy. The first scent is very different to the scent that comes in a second later. It's not all one level."

We try another taster. "This is Aqua Vitae, the second chapter of Aqua. I'm now writing the third chapter, Aqua Critique. Aqua Vitae is a celebration of life. Very outdoor, sunny, when your mind is light. The

inspiration for this was the dust of a fig tree, you have the dust, the sun and motorcycling on a very dry island. It's about the pleasure you get when your bed sheets are super clean. Or when you put on a shirt that has just been ironed. The feeling of the first time."

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It strikes me that a unisex perfume is a terrific idea, one that confirms what often happens anyway as lovers and friends swap their fragrances. "In western culture, we have a different concept of gender and sex," Kurkdjian says. "It's very important, gender in terms of taste. This is not something you have in, say, Middle Eastern culture. Even though there is a physical difference, in terms of perfume, they don't."

"Men came to perfume through grooming products, which have lavender, rosemary, thyme, herbal notes, because they have a kind

of antiseptic properties — wet, fresh, citrus also. They put perfume on in the morning because it was before shaving. A woman could re-apply perfume throughout the day and, because she's a woman, flowers, which is the most common pattern for perfumery. Women and flowers are close, throughout history of mankind. Rose and jasmine and all that. So, in our culture there is a pattern for men's perfume, and a pattern for women's perfume."

"What is changing a little bit now is that an ingredient doesn't make a gender, it's how you use it. Think about silk as a fabric, you can make a tie, or you can make a dress. And you have convention that says the tie is more masculine and the dress is more feminine. I can put rose in a perfume, but it depends on how I cut in to make it more masculine or feminine. Or jasmine. Eau Sauvage, which was the world's leading best seller for many years, is built with jasmine as a core flower. But you don't smell it. It's blurred with lavender and aromatic notes."

The tasters keep on coming: the Aqua Vitae was sensational but I'm getting punch drunk. Next is a fragrance which changes from its

initial impact into something very different: Oud. "Not the musical instrument," Kurkdjian explains. "This oud is an ingredient used by Arabic people, it comes from a wood. The same way patchouli in the Seventies had that cliche of being very hippy, oud wood is very clichéd now in terms of being an arabic smell. My idea was to give a modern western twist to a very arabic pattern."

It reminds me of amber. I ask whether that scent is popular with men. "They like it, but not sweet. You have to go with the dry part. If you go unisex, you have to make sure there is no flower. Unisex perfume is usually fresh, crisp and easy, like a white shirt. A men's white shirt for a woman is quite safe. Even for a man, you can always pretend. But think about something other than white cotton, it's much more difficult."

I ask whether, when creating a scent, he thinks in terms of increasing sexual attractiveness. "Well, first, the power of the visual is super-important. More than your nose. When I create a perfume

for myself, I am the first tester, I try it on my skin. I put dots on my skin, to follow different trails, and to follow them throughout the day. Until last September, I was using different colours. Then I noticed that many times, people were picking the nice colours. The brown, the green, the not-so-friendly colours, were like leftovers."

"I decided to do the same test, using the same colours, no matter what the colour was. Your brain reacts totally differently. If I let you smell this perfume in a bottle, like that, or if I send you the packaging, your brain works differently. So, to go back to your question, what is sexy? A man or woman wearing a towel on their waist can be sexy. But does she have to smell of soap, because she might get out of the spa, or the shower? Or does she have to smell of sex, sweaty and all that?"

"This is why musk became a very sexy scent in the US, you had a thing called Jovan Musk, the advertising around it was about

sexy attitude and half naked people during the Seventies. There is an association between the scent and sexy. But it is totally disconnected from being sweaty sexy. What I try to do with my perfume, I try to infuse that part of humanity that perfume needs, in my mind. Perfume is an artifice. You put something on your skin, and you pretend this is how you smell. It's invisible. It's not like an expensive watch, where you see the accessory. It's a trick to distract people."

Does he think about how the perfume acts with the skin? "It's impossible to think about all the people who put the perfume on," he replies. "If you have to take care of everybody, you wouldn't do it. To me, it's like a piece of clothing. The designer has an ideal model size, whether realistic or not, and this is the way it should look. If the fragrance has a strong signature, it is a statement, then from one skin to the other you will find that statement. If it is a very vague perfume, then it won't say anything on anyone."

Where on the body should scent be applied? "Chanel had a strong theory that you put perfume on where you want to be kissed. I tried

and to be honest that is the worst thing. Put the scent next to it, that works." He laughs, "Leave the place for the tongue, and all that."

As well as his brand, Kurkdjian also does scent installations, as a kind of creative relief from commercial pressures. "I've done it since 2003," he says. "In the commercial world, artistry has to stop at some point, and be aware that am I going to be understood, in a hostile environment, in a department store? You line up the brands, and it's not like in the museum or in a gallery, you have to look pretty. In that case, scent is about magnifying beauty. I've never seen a scent be a commercial success by talking about blood, sweat, war. Real art is magnifying the black side of humanity, I am magnifying the good side. I needed to find a way to provoke an emotion, but the emotion doesn't have to be nice. I don't want to think about being pleasant."

"My first step was creating a bespoke scent. It added a new

dimension to my work. Then I had the opportunity to collaborate with Sophie Calle, who works with installation and performance. She was commissioned by an American bank to work around the concept of money. She made videos, installations, writing, and at some point asked, does money have a smell? She asked me, with carte blanche, to create the smell of money."

Kurkdjian is like another kind of magician, another juggler, moving his projects around. A current project is a pop-up shop in Rue des Blancs-Manteaux, on the edge of Le Marais. "My idea was for two months to showcase my aesthetic, to display the things I like. People I believe in, designers, one is an olive oil-maker. Another makes organic vegetable juices. Also Baccarat. I have just created their signature fragrance for their 250th anniversary. It's almost like home for me, there's a homey feeling to it."

How does a brief from a company like crystal-makers Baccarat work? Does it request a particular scent? "I tell them it's not their job, it's my job. Because you cannot be driven by the ingredients. It's a statement but I'm not interested in that. Baccarat has worked with so many other perfume brands.

"I asked, what is Baccarat made of? Crystal is mineral, fire and blowing. Mixing these three things makes something super-dense and transparent in one single piece. I related the three elements, was able to find three raw materials and balance them with each other," he says of its woody-amber-floral essence. "Baccarat Rouge 540 is the trademark signature of the house, [the bottle] is made of crystal, when the crystal is boiling in the fire, you infuse pure 24 carat gold powder and you blow. Imagine you put this into another oven for four hours at 540°C, this will turn into a red piece of crystal. It's pure alchemy. You keep the best of the tradition and make it into something contemporary. Which is what I'm trying to do with Maison. It's the point of having your own house." ENDS

franciskurkdjian.com



Interview by Ben Mitchell — Portrait by Tom van Schelven



## WHAT I'VE LEARNED

**SIR IAN MCKELLEN** 

Actor, 75

Whenever I see a Lego figure of Gandalf I think, "That hasn't quite got the subtlety I was trying to bring to the character". Lego must forgive me! I'm more a Meccano man.

**Some people might assume** I go around talking about being gay all day long because it often comes up in interviews and I'll start spouting off. They may get the impression that I have nothing else on my mind.

I care less what people think of me now. That used to worry me enormously. "Why can't I have boots like everybody else at school, mum? Why do I have to be wearing shoes? I don't want to be different". These days I don't care. It's part of — here's the gay stuff — it's part of the confidence that I got when I came out.

**If you get to 75 and you go out** with your old friends, you talk about morbidity and mortality and decrepitude, as I did the other night for four hours.

One of the things I'm less pleased about is that when my mother died I thought, "Oh, that makes me rather special now because I'm a one-parent family", rather than, "What have I lost?' I was 12. I dare say, inside, I'd not quite got over my mother's death, which, I suppose, felt like some sort of rejection. Of course, it wasn't. It's a blessing if I have a dream about my mother. That's lovely, to revisit her.

**Actors call each other** "love", "darling" and "sweetheart" and so on to break down the barriers strangers have between them so they can work together in an intimate way.

I saw the Taj Mahal a few years ago. It was wonderful and, knowing that it had been there all the time, I did feel as though it had been waiting for me to visit. I would like to see Machu Picchu, though I suspect I'd be disappointed because there'd be a lot of people there.

My nickname at primary school was Kellogg's. I've always been glad that nobody has ever called me Mac. Stephen Fry christened me Serena when I got knighted, which I thought was a bit impertinent. I don't think I'm top choice. In the theatre – for Shakespeare – I'm quite near the top, but not for all directors. In film, I'm way, way, way down. Spielberg has never asked to work with me; Tarantino's never asked; Sam Mendes has never asked. It isn't as if there's a long list of films I've turned down, but there are plenty I wish I'd had a go at. That is the truth.

If I'm travelling I take pyjamas with me and I make sure that there's going to be a dressing gown around and, hopefully, bedroom slippers. Which of those I wear in bed will usually depend on the temperature and the nature of the linen.

I grew up in a teetotal house. I never drank tea, coffee or alcohol until I was 18, and I can do without them easily. That sounds like I'm really in charge of my life. I'm not at all.

As a declared vegetarian, I make a very good Quorn shepherd's pie. I stopped eating meat about 30 years ago and the headaches that I'd had since childhood vanished overnight. My indigestion got better, too. Though I find bacon and pork pies very difficult to resist.

I lived in Wigan during the war. There were no buildings going up so I had the impression that Wigan had been completed, there was no sign that anyone was changing anything. I'm still not used to the idea that London isn't finished and never will be. I find that quite unsettling. I like going to places that seem to be done, like a little village.

How do I kill time? Oh, don't. Fucking internet! I've always loved dictionaries and encyclopaedias. Now you've got all that on your computer. It's fantastic. You're looking up something about Dickens and you're invited to explore more and more and more. I don't know if that's wasting time or not, but it doesn't help me learn my lines.

I do get patriotic when I'm abroad. If people are disparaging about Britain — even if they're talking about areas that I don't like — then I get on the defensive. And if someone criticises British weather...!

My father – and his father – believed you have a responsibility to society in general. They manifested that through Christianity and social work. Both were pacifists. They were always looking at the world as somewhere they should participate in and try to improve. That's what I remember most about my father, who died when I was 24. We never became close, but I admired him when he was alive and I do still.

I went to Cambridge University and to be a grammar school boy on a scholarship was to be the odd person out. I was mocked because of my accent so I did consciously try not to have one. Of late, I've let it come back.

Go and see Macbeth. It's undoubtedly among the greatest plays ever written, there's no sub-plot and it's short. If it's done properly, it only takes two hours without an interval so you'll be knocked sideways. You can put that play on anywhere and it sells out. That's why it's supposed to be unlucky: if you heard in your company you're going to do Macbeth it was because they couldn't pay you by the end of the week so they had to shove it in.

I have intelligence but I'm not an intellectual. At school, I was effortlessly academic but not a hard worker. I ended up as head boy by fluke. I was the goody-goody.

When you're told you've got cancer, you want to know the implications. My cancer is the least threatening of any you could have because if you catch it early, as I did, there's absolutely no threat to your life or, indeed, to your functioning. I have prostate cancer.

**I've never hit anybody.** I once raised my fist to someone I was living with. They were appalled and so was I.

My stepmother was a Quaker and if I respond to any religious organisation it would be the [Religious] Society of Friends, who I think are absolutely admirable in their declared beliefs and also the way they carry them out. I am an atheist. I wonder at the galaxies and everything but I don't believe we're living in something that was created by divine intelligence. ENDS

#### Photographs by Chris Floyd



## SALE NOW ON

**By Mick Brown** 

## The art of the auction

One day in January, a few weeks before the Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale at Christie's in London, a handful of the auction house's resident specialists gathered in a storage area at the back of the company's headquarters in St James's for a ritual known as "hilling". The Evening Sales, in London and New York, are the biggest event in the calendar for both Christie's and its archrival Sotheby's, the Oscars of art, where the works of marquee artists such as Warhol, Picasso, Richter and Bacon are put on display. Here, though, the prizes are not statuettes but bank transfers in pounds and dollars, euros and roubles — the astronomical figures that power the global arts and antiques market reckoned to be worth some £40bn a year.

The ritual of "hilling" — so called because the floor of the storage area is set on a slight incline — dates to the late 18th century when the company moved to its present premises from the Pall Mall atelier, where the company's founder James Christie would greet the penurious artists and impecunious aristocrats wishing to put their works up for auction, cast an appraising eye and set a price. Here, the house's specialists gather around the works for a forthcoming sale and submit them to a final examination before they are priced and catalogued for sale.

Over the past few weeks, the 65 or so works, or "consignments", that will be auctioned in the Evening Sale have been arriving from all over the world, sturdily packed and crated, and stored in racks extending from floor to ceiling in the cramped space. Some works – certainly the most prestigious ones – will be familiar to the specialists. They will already have been examined in the seller's home, as part of the protracted negotiation which has brought the consignment to Christie's. They may even have been auctioned by Christie's before. Others may have been seen only in photographs. Now the specialists, and a conservator employed by the company will examine the paintings under a UV light, check the measurements and pool their expert knowledge on its condition, provenance and history. (The back of the frame can provide useful intelligence; a fading dealer's sticker, a label for an auctioneer or a show where the work has been exhibited, is like DNA in building up a picture of the work's history.) All of this points to one, central question: what estimate should be put on the work?

A handful of works have been taken out of their wooden casings and leaned in a disconcertingly casual manner against cabinets and walls. Katharine Arnold, the head of Evening Sale for Post-War and





BEN CLARK, CHRISTIE'S HEAD OF BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE, WITH "UNTITLED (NEW YORK CITY)" BY CY TWOMBLY WHICH SOLD FOR £19.7M

Contemporary Art, is giving me a tour. Arnold studied at Oxford and the London School of Ecomics, and worked at Merrill Lynch in equity sales before studying art at the Courtauld Institute and joining Christie's. As befits an organisation where aesthetics and money elide, everybody who works at Christie's seems to be beautiful, or stylish, or extremely clever, and often all three.

Here is a Cy Twombly painting, "Untitled (New York City)", one of the artist's "blackboard series", painted in 1970, a series of loops and gestures in what looks like chalk (in fact oil stick on oil paint) across a blackboard. In 2008, in the catalogue accompanying a retrospective of his work at Tate Modern, the museum's then director Nicholas Serota described Twombly's art as "elusive and, for many people, even enthusiasts of contemporary art, unfathomable". Now he's one of the hottest artists on the contemporary market. Last year, a similar work from the same series, but 20cm larger, sold at Christie's in New York for £40.5m, far exceeding its estimate of £22m.

The next highest price for a blackboard painting was the work now resting on the wall in the storage room, which achieved £11m three years ago. "A lot of new people entering the market are wanting to buy them, because they are so elegant, so easy to live with," Arnold says. "And I think very refined." Evaluating Twombly's reputation, his market standing and the quality of the painting — "its desirability" — Arnold and the other specialists have settled on an estimate of around £16m.

Over there is a Gerhard Richter, "Vierwaldstätter See" (Lake Lucerne), one of the artist's "photo-realist" paintings, from 1969, and one of four Richters in the sale. "It's a view of the lake looking towards Mount Rigi," Arnold says. "Artists have looked at this view for a long time. Turner painted it, so did Ruskin." She pauses. "Isn't it sublime?"

Like Twombly, Richter is an artist who painted for years without gaining international status. It was not until recently, when there were retrospectives of his work at the Tate Modern (2011) and the Pompidou in Paris (2012) – the equivalent of a shot of adrenaline into the heart of an artist's reputation – that his prices soared. In the same year, Christie's auctioned one of Richter's Candle paintings, which he'd

been unable to sell when he first exhibited them in 1982. The previous record for a Richter was £8m. Christie's estimated the Candle painting at £6.5–8.5m. It made £10.5m. It would now be worth in the region of £26m. "Vierwaldsttatter See" is being sold by an individual who bought it from the artist in 1973. Estimate? In the region of £10m.

So what else do we have? That's a Domenico Gnoli, "Inside of Lady's Shoe" (1969). Not to everybody's taste, perhaps, but with an estimate of £1.5–£2m. But who could resist the Francis Bacon painting of Pope Pius XII? Estimate around £9m. Throw in the Lucio Fontana "spatial concept" work on the shelf there, and the Howard Hodgkin painting, "In The Green Room" leaning on the back wall and I reckon I'm within touching distance of some of the most desirable contemporary artwork in the world, with an estimated value of £30m. In fact, as the Evening Sale will demonstrate, it's worth much, much more.

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The Christie's reception carries the hushed, yet palpable, aroma of wealth. Uniformed and white-gloved doormen, marble flooring, the grand staircase leading to the salesrooms. On a wall, a screen projects details of upcoming auctions, and properties offered for sale by its real-estate department: a manor in Greenwich, Connecticut (£9.1m); a New York penthouse (£26m); a Palm Beach estate (£40m). A Hermès handbag stands in a glass display case like a prized exhibit in a museum.

Anybody can walk inside and up the stairs to look at the art coming up for auction; it's a free show that few people seem to take advantage of — and the chances are you will never get the opportunity to see the work again after it vanishes once more back into private hands. There's a different kind of frisson from walking around the National or the Tate, where you know that nothing is for sale, as if your perspective is somehow sharpened by a sense of possibility, even longing. If I sold the car, the flat, the house, several houses, this could be mine.

From its founding in 1766 through to World War II, Christie's built its reputation, and its fortune, largely on sales of the work by great

KATHERINE ARNOLD, CHRISTIE'S HEAD OF EVENING SALE FOR POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART, BEFORE A PORTRAIT OF POPE PIUS XII BY FRANCIS BACON, WHICH ACHIEVED £10M AT THE FEBRUARY AUCTION



artists of the day (Gainsborough, Sargent, Rossetti) and the dispensation of goods and treasures from Britain's country houses. Auctioneering was a gentleman's profession, deals struck and consignments arranged at country house shooting weekends and lunch in St James's clubs, their provenance largely dependent on what became known as "the three D's", death, divorce and debt. As the 19th-century art dealer William Buchanan laconically put it: "In troubled waters we catch the most fish."

"It has its character this famous London saleroom where nothing has changed for more than 100 years," wrote French art dealer René Gimpel in 1919. "It's wonderful... Christie's in England, in the country of comfort and cleanliness, has the audacity to offer sheer discomfort and a parquet floor thick with dust. Pictures worth a few pounds alternate with £100,000 works and are sold along with them, everything 'just as it comes' on the walls. Three, four rows, the pictures one above the other, the finest sometimes just perched below the roof."

Christie's came to embody the old guard of the auction houses, the Establishment (although Sotheby's is actually older by 22 years), "an institution somewhere between an executive gentleman's club and a museum", as author Philip Hook said. But in the post-war period, Sotheby's dominated the market, largely through the influence of its chairman, the legendary Peter Wilson. He introduced the idea of the "country house sale", where rather than being sold off piecemeal, the contents of a stately home would be grandly auctioned in a marquee in the grounds, firmly cementing the notion of aristocratic provenance. But his greatest coup was the introduction of the Evening Auction, highly orchestrated occasions that brought flair and showmanship to the sale, transforming it into a high-profile media event.

But if Wilson was the architect of the modern auction business, Christie's has secured the high ground in recent years by aggressively developing the global market, reaching out to new millionaires and billionaires in Asia and the Middle East, establishing outposts in Shanghai, Mumbai and Dubai, and by commanding what is now the most lucrative corner of the market – post-war and contemporary art.

Christie's has more than 80 different departments in its two

London salesrooms, in St James's and South Kensington, auctioning everything from African and Oceanic art to topographical pictures, gold boxes and objects of vertu to sporting art and guns. In 2014, it clocked up £5.1bn in sales, up 12 per cent on 2013, and the fifth consecutive year Christie's has beaten the annual art-sales record.

But by far the largest proportion of the company's revenue is generated by sales of post-war and contemporary art, which, in 2014, rose 33 per cent to £1.7bn. The rising interest and value in contemporary art is one of the cultural phenomena of the last 20 years. We can see it in Britain, with the heat and light generated by the YBAs in the Eighties and Nineties, and the opening of Tate Modern in 2000, the world's most popular modern art museum, with around 4.8m visitors a year. This interest is now truly global: prices in the art market driven ever higher by the emergence of newly minted wealth in China, Russia, Asia and the Middle East.

A sale of post-war and contemporary art at Christies's in New York in November last year, set a new record for a single auction of £534m (\$853m). The artists on sale that evening were a who's who of marquee names in contemporary art: Francis Bacon, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Jeff Koons. Equally telling, there were buyers from 43 countries bidding across the 82 lots. As much as they are works of art, the paintings and sculptures by these artists are units of currency - a class of assets like commodities, equities and property - to be traded, bartered, used as collateral on loans, hidden not only from public view, but often from private view, stored in climate-controlled warehouses while they accrue value until the time is right to sell them. Much of the extensive collection of Jose Mugrabi, an Israeli textile importer, and his sons Alberto and David, including works by Renoir, Picasso, Hirst and Koons, as well as the largest collection of Warhols (believed to be some 800) is reportedly stored in two warehouses, one in Newark, New Jersey and the other in a duty-free zone in Zurich.

As Dirk Boll, Christie's managing director of Continental Europe points out, high prices, are nothing new in the art market. In the 19th century, when French *ébénisterie* (cabinet making) was the collecting





field with the highest values, a Riesener commode would fetch the equivalent of several million today. The fashion for *ébénisterie*, gave way to one for Old Masters, then 19th century and Impressionist pictures – once they had become historic. What is new is what Boll describes as "the canonisation" process of young artists and their work. "For the first time, these prices are being paid for unproven work, so to speak. Young art nowadays is in

museums, not after 20 years but after two years. The whole system – the market, institutions, art critics – is much more focussed on contemporary art and this has moved the process to a higher speed." So it is that a work by Jeff Koons, "Balloon Dog (Orange)" was able to acheive \$58.4m when it was auctioned at Christie's New York in 2013, becoming the most expensive work by a living artist sold at auction.

This is partly a consequence of availability. The best Old Masters or Impressionist paintings are, by definition, limited in number, often sequestered in museum collections and seldom come on the market. Living artists continue to produce art. But it is also due to the growth of the global market, and a growing universality in cultural taste. Collectors from the Middle East, for example, are unlikely to want to hang a Holbein Madonna on their wall. A Chinese collector is less likely to buy an oil painting, because the tradition in that culture is

TOP FROM LEFT: ARNOLD WITH COLLEAGUES AND THE CY TWOMBLY WORK; "STUDY FOR HEAD OF LUCIAN FREUD" BY FRANCIS BACON; FINE ART READY FOR "HILLING"; HOWARD HODGKIN'S WORK "IN THE GREEN ROOM" SOLD FOR £1.2M

works on paper. A Rothko, a Warhol — a Jeff Koons "Balloon Dog" — is a lingua franca which every nationality, particularly the extremely wealthy of every nationality, can read and understand. As Boll puts it, "Not only is it read in its artistic quality, but in its lifestyle quality. Everyone sees it and understands 'it is art'. It is by a globally famous artist, and it is expensive."

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It is a principle in the art world — advocated by no-one more fiercely than the auction houses — that an auction is the fairest way to buy an art work. How, it is often asked, particularly in the contemporary art world, can this painting, or sculpture — or bed, or shark — be worth so much money? The simple answer is because somebody is prepared to pay so much money for it. In a private sale, a dealer will charge what he thinks he can get from a buyer. It is the public auction that is held to be the true arbiter of a work's value.

This is how it works. The seller stipulates the reserve, the minimum price at which the work can be sold, and the auction house will suggest an estimate, say £150,000-£200,000, a guideline for what they calculate it's worth. This is always lower, of course, than what they









hope it will sell for. The reserve cannot be higher than the low estimate. It is at the auctioneer's discretion where he (or she) starts the bidding. For example, the reserve on an item might be £100,000. The auctioneer starts the bidding at £70,000. Somebody bids £80,000. If nobody else enters the bidding, the auctioneer may invent a non-existent bid — "£90,000 at the back of the room against you, sir" — in order to drum up interest and encourage the potential buyer to raise his bid at least to the reserve, or "help the bidder to buy the painting", as one auctioneer put it to me. This "chandelier bidding", as it is called, is perfectly legal up to a figure below the level of the low estimate, but not on or beyond it.

In addition to the "hammer price", the buyer pays a premium to the auction house; at Christie's it's 25 per cent of the successful bid up to and including £50,000; 20 per cent above £50,000, and 12 per cent

in excess of £1m. The seller also pays a consignor fee. As the competition to consign higher-priced works becomes ever more cut-throat, however, "big ticket" sellers are increasingly insisting they should bypass a consignor fee and receive not only the sale price of the item, but also net a negotiated percentage of the buyer's premium, too.

When "Balloon Dog (Orange)" was sold in New York, for example, the owner of the work, newsprint magnate

Peter M Brant, violated the unspoken rule of silence that usually governs such transactions, by publicly announcing that to secure the work Christie's had waived the seller's commission and given him what was described as "a large share" of the buyer's fees. These kind of deals may considerably reduce the auction house's margins, but, or so the logic goes, important works by marquee names provide invaluable publicity and attract buyers and sellers of lesser pieces.

Until comparatively recently, the way of doing business was largely based on chance. A collector would decide to sell a work, they would turn up at Christie's to have it appraised and valued and it would be duly auctioned. At the lower end of the market this is still the case.

But the random collection of work — everything "just as it comes on the walls" as Rene Gimbel put it — is a thing of the distant past. Today, auctions are "curated" as carefully as any museum exhibition,

based on the fluctuating fashions of the market, with the requisite mixture of artists-of-the-moment, solid established names and rising stars. So it is that the consignments for the Evening Sale include Richter, Bacon, Twombly and Warhol, but also Tracey Emin, Anish Kapoor and Thomas Schütte.

"You want to create a sense of the last 60 years and have something from every decade of the post-war

BOTTOM FROM LEFT:
JUSSI PYLKKÄNEN; BIDDING
FOR "THREE DELEGATES"
BY JEAN-PAUL BASQUIAT;
"L'HEURE DE LA HÂTE (THE
HOUR OF ANTICIPATION)"
BY JEAN DUBUFFET IS
READIED FOR AUCTION;
A CUSTOMER FOLLOWS
THE SALE ON HIS TABLET







BIANCA CHU, HEAD OF POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART AT CHRISTIE'S SOUTH KENSINGTON, ALONGSIDE "UNTITLED" BY CHRISTOPHER WOOL, WHICH RAISED £1.87M AT THE SALE

period," says Francis Outred, Christie's international head of post-war and contemporary art. "At the same time, it's a matter of understanding what the market wants and what the top buyers want, and proactively going after a particular type of material to create these contexts. We are a platform. We offer access to the global audience of collecting. We can follow taste, and attempt to arouse taste, but we can't dictate it."

In the rivalry between Christie's and Sotheby's, the competition to land the big-money consignments is fierce, and depends on building up a store of intelligence on art works and collectors around the world, and cultivating relationships with putative sellers and buyers. Christie's has a client strategy and business intelligence team numbering 75 people headed by Ben Clark, an affable, expensively-tailored Englishman (everybody at Christie's is expensively-tailored), who joined in 2000 after working at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Clark's first job for the firm was valuation specialist, a role that partly entailed travelling around Britain, visiting country houses and pricing the hunting pictures, seascapes and family portraits on their walls. "It was wonderful, to see the art and to see how people live with the art. Some clients would always insist that you'd have to drink a bottle of port before you went to bed, which was a bit tricky, and then play backgammon with them, which was never a good idea..."

When he started, he says, an old hand gave him a useful piece of advice: always park your car facing away from the house. Clark pondered on this: was it a matter of aesthetics? In case of the need to make a quick getaway? Not a bit of it, the old hand explained. "When at the end of the stay you get in the car, as you and the client are bidding each other goodbye and you slip into reverse, you run the risk of running over his dog." In those days, landing consignments was largely a matter, as Clark puts it, of "spinning a spider's web". Now he says, rather than spinning a web, "we are like a fisherman; we have to create our own fly and tailor it so you can catch the fish."

Gone are the days when an auction house rubbed its hands, however discreetly, at news of any one of the three Ds – death, debt and divorce – a phrase at which Clark visibly stiffens in disapproval.

"It's not in our lexicon anymore. The three Ds are simply a trigger for reactivity, which is not the way we do business. If we haven't already been in those conversations with our clients, we're not doing our job."

Rather the objective is to build a relationship, sometimes over many years, to become what Clark describes as "a trusted partner" with the collector, be they selling, or buying. This, he says, is "not simply a one-on-one relationship", but a team endeavour. "If we look at the collectors who buy very high-value works of art - £5m plus - they categorically, and the data and intelligence proves it, buy across five or six different disciplines, be it art, furniture, jewellery. For me, the definition of a collector is not someone focussing on just one area of interest. It's never that."

Securing consignments then – rather like fishing – is a matter of patience. Positioning yourself so that when a collector decides to sell it is to you that he turns; advising him, or her, that given market conditions now might be just the right time to divest themselves of that Yves Klein, that Murillo, that Basquiat. Central to the process, of course, is the pitch, when a team of specialists will meet with the client to discuss exactly how the work would be marketed and sold. The pitch to the owner of Koons's "Balloon Dog" included a hefty hardback book, in a presentation box, discussing the modern masterpiece market and giving an academic appraisal of Koons and his oeuvre, as well as Christie's history with the artist, along with a dummy catalogue for the sale, featuring the work on its cover. "It's a conversation piece," Clark says. "Making our vision concrete for the client."

The assumption is, of course, that Sotheby's are doing exactly the same thing. When, in 2004, Japanese electronics manufacturer Maspro Denkoh decided to sell its corporate collection of Impressionist paintings, including works by Cezanne and Van Gogh, both Christie's and Sotheby's submitted proposals for the consignment. Unable to decide between them, the company's president Takashi Hashiyama, asked the arch rivals to decide between themselves. Not surprisingly, they declined. To settle the matter, Mr Hashiyama proposed a game



FRANCIS OUTRED, INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART, CHRISTIE'S EUROPE, WITH "VIERWALDSTÄTTER SEE" BY GERHARD RICHTER

of "rock, paper and scissors" to be played in Maspro's Tokyo office. The representative from Sotheby's chose paper. The representative from Christie's chose scissors – a decision that netted the company around \$1.9m in commision when, in May 2005, the collection was sold for \$17.8m.

Of the paintings in the February Evening Sale, Francis Outred estimates that half came unsolicited and half as a result of a long-term ongoing dialogue between the auction house and the owner. Much of Outred's time is spent flying around the world meeting collectors. "What I love about this business is the hunt. I love trying to find great material to bring to auction and to market it in a way to maximise the price."

The son of an antiques dealer, who learned the trade by working at weekends in his father's shop, Outred is, as he puts it, "a bit of a geek" about Francis Bacon, a passion that began at the age of 15 when he was given the catalogue for a retrospective of the painter's work in Washington. As a trainee at Sotheby's, where he worked until joining Christie's in 2009, Outred began to build his own dossier on Bacon, plotting the whereabouts and movement of his work around the world — "if you showed me a painting I'd probably know where it is" — and cultivating relationships with as many owners of Bacon's work as possible.

Perhaps Outred's greatest coup was his part in securing the consignment of Bacon's triptych, "Three Studies of Lucien Freud", which sold at Christie's Post-war and Contemporary Evening Sale in New York in November 2013. The work was painted in 1969, and originally exhibited at Galleria Galatea in Turin, but did not find a buyer for the complete triptych. Instead, it was divided, with one panel going to an Italian hotelier, and the other two to a French collector. Some time later, a collector, Mr A, then bought the hotel, in order to acquire the Bacon painting, and set about pursuing the remaining two panels. In the late Seventies, Mr A acquired one, through a dealer, from the French collector, who was in need of funds. In the early Eighties, once more in need of funds, the Frenchman

offered the painting to Mr A, but at an exorbitant price. Mr A declined. Instead, the remaining panel was sold through an intermediary to a Japanese collector. Ten years later, the Japanese, now in need of funds himself, sold the work, through the same intermediary, to Mr A, at an "affordable" (these things are relative...) price, bringing together the three paintings for the first time in more than 20 years.

Outred had first earmarked the painting 12 years ago, and started working towards positioning Christie's for the consignment should Mr A ever wish to sell, but it was not until five years ago that he saw the three panels together for the first time. "I'd seen it reproduced in books over the years, fantasising..." he says. "When I actually saw it, I literally had shivers down my back."

After what Outred describes as "a very long, complex process" of negotiation involving the owner, members of his family and numerous intermediaries, Christie's eventually secured the consignment. As part of their marketing strategy, the firm prepared what is known in the trade as a vanity catalogue, a lavishly illustrated book containing essays about the work that was circulated to some 500 prominent collectors around the world. An estimate of \$85m (£55.1m) was put on the painting when it came to auction in New York in November 2013.

"The first thing that happened in the room was a 26-year-old Asian put his hand up," Outred remembers. "Neither I nor any of the team had any idea who he was. He bid \$85m. Then suddenly there was a rally of phone bidders, and this guy stopped. And at \$125m [£81m] he suddenly came back in. I was thinking, my God, who is he?"

It transpired he was a book dealer, who had fallen in love with the painting after seeing a copy of the vanity catalogue. In the end, he was outbid. "Three Studies of Lucien Freud" was sold for \$142.4m (£92.1m), the most expensive artwork ever sold at auction.

So where will it end? How long can we expect to see the prices of contemporary art soaring and, presumably Christie's profits soaring with them? Francis Outred is confident the bubble is not about to burst, or at least not yet. He talks of the "gigantic global thirst" for modern art which shows no sign of abating. The buyers from 43

different countries at the Evening Sale in New York in 2014 were bidding on lots with an average value of \$10m (£6.5m) plus. "If you think that in each of those countries there's just one individual buying at that level, then probably 10 of his friends and colleagues are being inspired – so suddenly you've 43 times 10, which is a good growing population of bidders. The population of billionaires in the world has doubled in the last five years. And if the wealth is growing in individuals, their disposable income is also growing."

Dirk Boll too evinces confidence: "The high prices in the market not only talk about appreciation of art, or investment into art; art has become part of general social and economic development, not only price-wise but in the sense of assets and buying and selling. Very often, it's not collecting in the traditional sense; it's getting it and then letting it go. That's a different attitude."

Whether people buy art for aesthetic reasons to hang on their wall, he suggests, or simply as an investment, to be stored until the time is right to sell is neither here nor there. "To be frank, to the public it

doesn't make the slightest difference whether the owners of a painting have it above their mantlepiece, or keep it in storage," he says. "It might even be better for the works of art to be stored in a safe environment with low temperatures, no sunlight etc, rather than having it in a Fifth Ave apartment.

"Since I believe in art and am the owner of art, I would say that every investor who buys a work of art rather than a sports car or a boat not only helps the art market and the artist, but maybe the artwork does something to these people and they discover that although they bought it as an

asset it actually adds more to their life than another asset could do." He laughs. "Therefore, I welcome every single investor on the market."

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The author Bruce Chatwin, who as a young man worked in the Antiquities and Impressionist Art departments at Sotheby's, once cynically likened the faces of bidders at an auction to "old men in nightclubs deciding whether they can really afford to pay that much for a whore." In fact, the atmosphere is more like a cross between a theatre and a stock exchange, peopled with well-heeled men and sleek women keenly looking on as prices and reputations rise or fall. Only a small proportion, it quickly becomes apparent, have come to buy. An Evening Sale is one of the best free shows in town.

The auctioneer, Christie's global president Jussi Pylkkänen, stands on a rostrum at the end of the room, the prize items – the Bacon, the Richter lake, the Twombly blackboard – displayed on the walls around him. To either side, some 40 Christie's staffers are packed behind

wooden counters, phones in hand to monitor telephone bids. An image of each lot is projected on a large screen behind him, the rising bids shown in pounds, dollars, Euros, Swiss francs and roubles.

Pylkkänen cuts a surprisingly jaunty, even playful figure, his smiling face sweeping the room like a searchlight, as the paddles held by prospective buyers rise and fall with a barely perceptible twitch. "Are you in, madam? No? Are you sure?" His tone suggests, don't worry, what's a few hundred thousand to someone as clearly discerning — and as clearly rich — as you. "It could be your lucky evening, sir!"

Possibly two-thirds of the bids seem to be coming from telephone bidders. When an Andy Warhol self-portrait comes up, a middle-aged woman dressed all in black, sitting in the well of the room, whispers into a telephone as the bids rise towards its high estimate of  $\mathfrak{L}3.5m$ . Her expression when she secures it for  $\mathfrak{L}3.6m$  is totally deadpan.

The pace is surprisingly brisk. The Cy Twombly blackboard painting, which the consigner (rumoured to be Leonard Riggio, the founder and chairman of Barnes & Noble) bought for \$17.4m three

years ago, sells for £19.7m (\$30m) to an Asian buyer. A good evening's work for Mr Riggio.

The Francis Bacon Pope, estimated at around £9m, goes for £10m. (Sale prices, it should be remembered, include the buyer's commission but estimates do not.) Richter's "Vierwaldstatter See" goes for £15.8m, surpassing its estimate of around £10m. Surprisingly, perhaps these items pass with little freneticism; hardly surprising that a Richter should realise this, and a Twombly that, a frisson of anti-climax even that they didn't realise more. When Jean-Michel Basquiat's painting

"Three Delegates", estimated at £5-£7m, realises only £4.3m (only!), there is a tangible sense of disappointment, as if even from the grave Basquiat has somehow let the side down.

The greatest buzz of the evening comes on what you might call the under-card. A stark white elaboration of shapes in acrylic on overlapping canvasses, "Intersuperficie Curva Bianca" by Italian artist Paolo Scheggi, sells in a round of excited bidding for £1.1m, three times its high estimate of £350,000. The Hodgkin painting, "In The Green Room", estimated at £550,000-£750,000, sells for £1.2m, a new record for the artist.

So, Scheggi and Hodgkin are up. Basquiat is down. Among the specialists and the Client Relations and Intelligence team, these things will be keenly noted. The final total for the evening is £116.8m, within the pre-sale target but six per cent short of last year's equivalent Evening sale. Afterwards, the art and business journos slug back the free wine and canapes, and avidly deconstruct the implications for art and for business. Jussi Pylkkänen is shining his searchlight smile around the room. It has, he declares, been "a roaring success". ENDS christies.com



# ELITE ELITE

ON HOLIDAY



## THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO THE GOOD LIFE

## **101 INDISPENSABLE CONTACTS**

Edited by Max Olesker Illustrations by Mark Long





#### **EXPERIENCES**

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#### 001

# THE GREATEST WATER SPORT

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. . . . .

No, hepcats, flyboarding doesn't only mean "really cool boarding". How about water-jet nozzleboots attached to a long hose, the propulsion from which allows the boarder to hover and dive in and out of the sea like a human dolphin. It's something that needs to be experienced to be believed, and is just one of the many life-enhancing activities for quests at the multiaward-winning Sun Siyam, an idvllic 52-acre resort a 45-minute seaplane flight from Maldivian capital Malé. Less adventurous watersports include kiteboarding and banana boating; regardless, the blue lagoon water will contrast nicely with the green of your envious friends witnessing your stay on Instagram. £103 per 30 minutes thesunsiyam.com

#### 002

#### THE HEALTHIEST HIKES

Aegean Suites Hotel Megali Ammos Beach, Skiathos, Greece +30 21 0619 6980

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A hotel with many advantages, including its superb location (a spectacular hillside on the Greek island of Skiathos), its rooms (spacious suites with Royal Warrant-holding Hypnos beds) and the weather (excellent), but it also boasts a secret weapon: Mr Widmann. The island's plant expert is behind twice-weekly herb hikes: guests are led across

the island to discover some of Skiathos' 1,000+ herbs, taught about their therapeutic and medicinal properties and encouraged to sample some. Foraging done right. £45 per person for a group of 6, £7 for every additional person santikoscollection.com

#### 003

# THE MOST SPECTACULAR CAMP

Mombo Camp Botswana

+27 11 807 1800

Botswana's most expensive safari camp, Mombo (and Little Mombo) offers 12 luxurious tents, raised 2m above ground level, from which to view some of the most spectacular game in Africa. Giraffe, rhino, leopard, impala and *lechwe* (Botswanan antelope) can all be sighted, while lion prides live nearby. When not out on game drives or photographing wildlife from a hide, guests can enjoy superb South African wine. From £1,155 per person, per night wilderness-safaris.com

#### 004

#### **THE GREATEST APES**

Volcanoes Safaris Uganda, Rwanda +44 870 870 8480

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Volcanoes Safaris don't actually specialise in seeking out rare volcanoes in their natural habitat (though hiking up them can be arranged). They offer encounters with rare chimpanzees and mountain gorillas, from its four lodges in Uganda and Rwanda. Particularly impressive is Kyambura Gorge Lodge on the Savannah Plains with eight bandas (huts) converted from

a coffee processing plant. Personalised itineraries include primate tracking, bird spotting, river walks and cruises on the Kazinga Channel, a waterway full of elephant, buffalo and hippo. Safaris from £1,817 volcanoessafaris.com

#### 005

#### THE MOST EXCLUSIVE TREK

Hotel Aurelio Lech am Arlberg, Austria +43 5583 2214

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There's more to a ski resort than skiing, especially at Aurelio, the ultra-luxe chalet in the Alps owned by Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska. As well as the amenities of a top-of-the-range hotel (24-hour butler, helicopter transfers). Aurelio offers llama trekking: rides of up to seven hours across alpine countryside past lakes and waterfalls. accompanied by both a guide and a llama (which comes laden with a very good picnic). From £120 aureliolech.com

#### 006

#### **THE BEST TENNIS**

Rancho Valencia 5921 Valencia Circle, Rancho Santa Fe, California 92067

+1 858 756 1123

Rancho Valencia's membership scheme allows use of the resort's 18 plexi-paye tennis courts plus coaching, clinics and private lessons from on-site pros. Those truly committed to upping their game can participate in its ownership programme, guaranteeing six weeks' residency per year. (NB: Despite the high standard of coaching available, guests may still find themselves distracted by Rancho Valencia's other attractions, such as the spa. olive groves, casitas, fine dining restaurant and complimentary Porsche Test Drive Programme.) ranchovalencia.com

#### 007

#### THE GREATEST GOLF

Vila Vita Parc Rua Anneliese Pohl, Alporchinhos, P-8400-450 Porches, Algarve, Portugal +351 282 31 01 00

1001202

A sizeable number of guests here have no interest in the two Michelin-starred restaurant, or the Cave de Vinhos wine cellar which houses over 11,000 bottles, or the 72ft yacht available for private hire, or the seven outdoor pools, or the Bavarian beer garden - as extraordinary as that may seem. No, they're there for the golf. The resort offers programmes for players of all abilities, including coaching for novices on the hotel's nine-hole pitch-and-putt practice course and 18-hole putting green. For those with more swing, the resort will book you into any of the nearby championship golf courses. £26 for 30 minutes vilavitaparc.com

#### 800

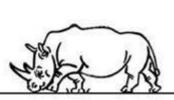
# THE MOST CELEBRATED SQUASH

Gstaad Palace CH-3780 Gstaad, Switzerland

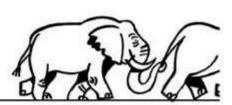
+41 33 748 50 00

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There are other places one could go for squash, but surely none so bequiling as the guests' private court at the internationally-renowned Gstaad Palace. The Swiss hotel has been owned by the Scherz family since opening in 1913. and is beloved by royals and A-listers, who come for its luxurious rooms - including two Tower Suites, a Penthouse Suite and the Walig Hut. a separate hillside hideaway - and activities on offer, including hiking, rafting, carriage rides, golf, tennis and, indeed, squash. £13 per hour (£10 for racket hire) palace.ch







#### THE OLDEST DIET

Princesa Yaiza Hotel Resort Avda Papagayo, 22, Playa Blanca, Lanzarote, Spain +34 928 519 300

Our paleolithic forefathers didn't spend their time enjoying five-star resorts on the fringes of golden Lanzarote beaches. but that hasn't stopped Princesa Yaiza Hotel (just such a place) from running a hugely popular Paleo Training Master Class. Mornings combine healthy food (vegetables, meat, fish, no carbs or processed food) with exercises to replicate the functional movements of our ancestors (climbing, jumping, carrying, grunting etc). The best in the class goes on to wrestle a sabre-toothed tiger. Possibly. £2 per person for group class. £33 for personal class princesayaiza.com

#### 010

#### THE GREATEST FISH

Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef, Australia +61 2 9571 6399

Ultra-green beachside camp sleeping up to 18 guests in nine luxury tents, set in the unspoilt Cape Range National Park with the Ningaloo Reef off shore. The guides are experts on the unique wildlife and Aboriginal history. From 1 April 1 to 31 July, gentlegiant whale sharks (the world's largest fish) migrate through the region and guests can snorkel with them as well as turtles, dolphins, dugongs and rays. From £1,343, including three nights accommodation salsalis.com.au

#### 011

#### THE HEARTIEST WEEKEND

Wilderness Reserve Sibton Park, Suffolk +44 20 7484 5700

Get stuck into a weekend of honest-to-goodness stuff at

a private 4.500-acre Suffolk estate. Multiple activities include clay-pigeon shooting, boot camps, waterskiing, hiking, deep-sea angling, buggy tours even a breakfast masterclass on moths (yes, moths). For accommodation, big groups should book the stunning Sibton Park, a Georgian country house that sleeps 21: adventurous couples should plump for one-bedroom Hex Cottage, blissfully electricity-free and heated by a wood burner (which also heats the water). Hex Cottage: £200-£250; Sibton Park: £2.250-£3.500, per night wildernessreserve.com

#### 012

#### THE FINEST WINE

La Grande Maison 10 Labottière Street, 33000 Bordeaux, France +33 535 381 616

The newest opening from hugely celebrated culinary star Jöel Robuchon offers two restaurants (one gourmet, one casual) and six bedrooms in the lavish Napoleon III style. The project is a collaboration between Robuchon and Bernard Magrez, the Bordeaux wine magnate (the house wine list features 259 Grands Crus) and, rumours say, it's aimed squarely at adding another three Michelin stars to Robuchon's alreadyunprecedented total of 28. Rooms from £255 per night lagrandemaison-bordeaux.com

#### 013

# THE MOST SPECTACULAR SAFARI Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp

Namibia

Small but perfect safari camp accessible only by light aircraft. The stunning Namib desert and Atlantic ocean-side landscape is home to elephant, giraffe, boks, fur seals and innumerable difficult-to-pronounce birds (including Rüppell's korhaan, tractrac chat

and bare-cheeked babblers). Go on game drives, shore walks, explore desert oases, then relax in a "tent" that's really a luxury hotel. From £310 per person, per night wilderness-safaris.com

#### 014

#### THE BEST RESERVE

Pikaia Lodge Barrio El Camote, a 100 m de Cerro Mesa, Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos, Ecuador +593 4371 1670

There is no more ecologyconscious way of taking a selfie with a Galápagos tortoise than at Pikaia Lodge, on top of two extinct volcanoes on Santa Cruz Island in the Galápagos Archipelago. The five-star lodge. available for three-, four- or seven-night stays, is a model of environmental sustainability; it's carbon neutral, solar-powered, uses only biodegradable cleaning products and operates efficient recycling. All of which makes that trip to the Tortoise Reserve (yes!) all the sweeter.

From £4,900 for 3 nights in a double room. From £3,420 for 3 nights in a single room pikaialodgegalapagos.com

#### 015

#### THE ULTIMATE BUSH CAMP

Bamurru Plains Australia

+61 2 9571 6399

Located in Australia's Top End on the edge of the Timor and Arafura Seas, this luxury lodge's ten safari bungalows are built on stilts above the floodplain. You'll live close to creatures such as the intermediate egret. orange-footed scrub fowl, chestnut-backed button quail, white-bellied mangrove snake. black wallaroo, ornate burrowing frog and the rather wonderfully named peaceful dove. From £280 per adult, per night as part of a timeshare bamurruplains.com

#### 016

# THE MOST IMPRESSIVE YOGA

Silver Island Yoga Greece

+27 72 624 2242

It's doubtful there's a more comprehensive means of escaping the rat race than by travelling to an off-the-grid. private Greek island on a yoga retreat. Silver Island offers six nights of physical and spiritual renewal, including twice-daily yoga, three daily vegetarian Mediterranean meals (all the food is seasonal and locally sourced before being served on an outdoor table nestled under a palm tree, naturally), kayaking, snorkelling, and no possible means of answering your email. Full board and practice from £1.100 per person, per week silverislandyoga.com

#### 017

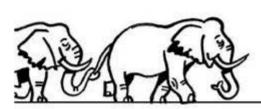
# THE MOST SERIOUS SURFING

Máncora Marina Hotel Panamericana Norte Km 1215, Mancora Chico, Pocitas, Piura, Perú

+51 73 258 614

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Those serious about surf could do worse than visit this hotel in Peru, where you can practice on a vast expanse of pristine private beach. Máncora, with its choppy waves and clement weather, is swiftly becoming a renowned surf-destination, and local guides will happily take you through the basics (if you're a novice) or lead you to the real action (if you're a pro, or a psychopathically confident novice). Unwind at the boutique Máncora Marina Hotel which offers 12 rooms (each of which are "538.21 sq ft" in size, the hotel notes with remarkable specificity) a restaurant serving plentiful ceviche and margaritas. and a 90ft infinity pool stretching out into the ocean. From £65 per night mancoramarina.com





#### **THE BEST WALK**

Milford Sound Lodge South Island, New Zealand +64 3 249 8071

Each year, 14,000 people are drawn to the 53 5km walk from Lake Te Anau to Milford Sound, known as the Milford Track. The epic, four-day journey winds through New Zealand's ancient beech forests, over mountains and past lakes (take a detour to the majestic Sutherland Falls). Milford Sound Lodge offers a range of premium chalets boasting well-appointed kitchens and stunning views (obviously); the Pio Pio Cafe serves hearty food for those too exhausted to cook. Premium riverside chalet, from £170 per night (extra £15 per person for twin share) milfordlodge.com

#### 019

#### THE FIRST-RATE VIEW

Treehotel Edeforsväg 2 A, 960 24 Harads, Sweden +46 92810300

Beautifully-executed concept hotel with unique architectdesigned rooms suspended 4-6m above ground in trees in the Harads forest. Treerooms include the minimalist Blue Cone (which is red, actually), the almost invisible Birds Nest, which appears to be an enormous tangle of branches accessed by a hidden staircase. Particularly beautiful is the Mirrorcube. a futuristic wood cube covered in reflective glass which sleeps two and is accessed by a dramatic 12m bridge. The room's interiors are unique, with the architecture, furniture, lighting and fabrics custom designed for each. All guests get breakfast (which is locally sourced) at the Fifties-style guest house run by the hotel's owners. Mirrorcube from £360 per night for two treehotel.se

#### 020

#### THE OLDEST HOTEL

Nishiyama Onsen Keiunkan Hayakawa, Yamanashi, Japan

+81 556 48 2111

A bustling VIP nightclub, a penthouse suite with rotating bed and a blistering WiFi connection are just three things Nishiyama Onsen Keiunken resolutely does not have (in fact, it lacks WiFi completely). This is because, having opened for business in 705AD, this Japanese rvokan (traditional inn) is the oldest hotel in the world. It does offer, however, six different kinds of traditional hot spring baths, from four geothermal springs. These onsen are long believed to have healing properties due to their mineral content. Factor in the panoramic mountain-andriver views and exquisite level of service (family-owned for 52 generations, the hotel runs fairly smoothly now) and you'll barely miss your iPad-powered entertainment or motionactivated humidor. Ryokan roll. keiunkan.co.jp

#### 021

#### THE HEALTHIEST OVERHAUL

Lonhea Alpine Clinic Avenue Centrale 85, CP 109, 1884 Villars-sur-Ollon, Switzerland

+41 24 495 38 88

The ultimate lifestyle reboot starts with a four-hour consultation before guests are written a bespoke treatment plan (from £7,100) for their week's stay based on the expertise of legions of on-call personal trainers. nutritionists, chiropractors and masseuses. The boutique hotel (maximum occupancy 18) is the work of cardiovascular specialist Dr Michael Golay, and is based on the concept of salutogenesis, the notion of creating health as opposed to pathogenesis (which is to do with defining the origin of diseases, and speaks of a very different sort of holiday).

The treatment doesn't end when you leave, either; guests receive follow-up calls for four months, to ensure they're on track. *lonhea.com* 

#### 022

#### THE FINEST FEAST DAY

Palazzo Margherita Corso Umberto 64, 75012 Bernalda (MT), Italy As recommended by Francis Ford Coppola, director

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"To me, the notable wonder to see in Bernalda, Italy, are the days of the festa, a pageant I always enjoy [20 May; 23 August]. The hotel is on the main street, where the festa takes place with its traditions; from the procession of the patron saint to the live music. It's wonderful to see the sincere participation of the people that still keep the historical rite, passed on through the generations. Sitting outside the hotel's Cinecittà Bar, or in the balcony of the salon, you see the locals enjoying the annual event. The weather makes for wonderful afternoons at Palazzo Margherita's pool or the nearby beach. By the pool, relax, read a book and sip a drink, while at the beach walk, swim and enjoy a picnic with local cheese, meats, and fresh fruits... breathing the air of the Ionian Sea." coppolaresorts.com

#### 023

# THE BEST SCUBA DIVING Cocos Island National Park Costa Rica

There's a reason Cocos is a sought-after diving location. A 36-hour boat ride from the Port of Puntarenas, the tiny, rainforest-covered island (four miles long) was the inspiration for the island in *Jurassic Park*. The wildlife is incredible on land and sea; divers will witness manta rays, sailfish, tuna, dolphins, moray eels and reef fish, scalloped hammerhead sharks and enormous whale sharks,

which grow up to 20m in length (thankfully, they dine only on plankton). The island itself, which is populated by rare butterflies and exotic plants, and no human residents other than temporary marine park and coastguard staff, is about as close to paradise on earth as it's possible to get. divequest-diving-holidays.co.uk

#### 024

#### THE MIGHTIEST SUBMARINE Laucala Island Resort

Fiji

+679 888 0077

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It's got an impressive-sounding name and the DeepFlight Super Falcon more than lives up to it. A sci-fi dream made reality. the state-of-the-art, two-man submarine is 21ft long with a 9ft span, can descend to 120m and travels submerged at six knots. Its 360° views through glass pods are perfect for the reefs and lagoons at Laucala Island (owned by the billionaire CEO of Red Bull, Dietrich Mateschitz) are among the most breath-taking in the world. Some of the sealife intrepid submariners will encounter include corals, parrotfish, angelfish, lionfish, turtles and reef sharks. laucala.com

#### 025

# THE MOST EDUCATIONAL TOUR

#### Military History Tours

+44 84 5835 0644

T-1-1

Whatever your interest in major conflict, the MHT boffins will have a European mission to undertake, from the Dambusters targets to the real *Great Escape* camp. They have issued a warning: "To enjoy what history offers, we suggest you need to be able to walk 500m in one go several times a day and be able to climb a set of stairs and be able to walk up a slight incline." Expect some senior tour companions.

Tours from £299 per person militaryhistorytours.co.uk



#### **URBAN SPLENDOUR**

#### The gardens, great views and palaces representing the best of city life

#### 026

#### THE GRANDEST HOTEL

Hôtel Meurice 228 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris

+33 1 4458 1010

Spectacular, opulent hotel long favoured by the great and the good including Salvador Dali, Franklin D Roosevelt, Taylor and Burton, Jay Z and Kanye West ("Ni\*\*as in Paris" was recorded here). The hotel is triple Michelin-starred (Alain Ducasse presides over all food and drink), the sumptuous. Louis XVI-style interiors are by Philippe Starck and it's centrally located between Place de la Concorde and the Louvre, in the 1st arrondissement. C'est magnifique. From £560 per night dorchestercollection.com /en/paris/le-meurice

#### THE MOST IMPRESSIVE **POWER BREAKFAST**

Loews Regency 540 Park Avenue, and 61st Street. New York 10065

+1 212 759 4100

The Loews Regency's famed power breakfast was inaugurated in 1975 when founder Bob Tisch invited New York's business and political leaders to meet before work and discuss ways of recovering from the mid-Seventies financial crisis. Breakfast at the Regency Bar & Grill remains an iconic experience, more so since the hotel's \$100m renovation, and you'll likely find yourself dining alongside NYC's most powerful people. It also welcomes animals (or "Very Important Pets" as it

terms them) and runs a dedicated men's salon, JF Men, by French hair stylist Julien Farel. loewshotels.com/regency-hotel

#### 028

#### THE GREATEST GIN PALACE

Ping Pong 129 Gintonería 129 Second Street, L/G Nam Cheong House. Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong +852 9158 1584

Mother's ruin has seldom heen served so attractively as in this quasi-secret gin joint behind a red door in a former table tennis gym (thus the name) owned by architect-andproprietor Hugh Zimmern. Cool and artsy (the Gagosian Gallery held its Art Basel party here) with, curiously, a Spanish vibe in everything from menu (Padrón peppers, smoked anchovies, ham, croquettes) to Spanish glassware in which 30-plus gins from around the globe are served. pingpong129.com

#### 029

#### THE PERFECT RUSSIAN **WHITE NIGHT**

**Grand Hotel Europe** Mikhailovskaya Ulitsa 1/7, St Petersburg, Russia

+44 845 0772 222

St Petersburg is the world's most northern major city with a 4.8m population. A quirk of its location is the city's legendary "white nights" (beliye nochi), the perpetual summer twilight between 11 June and 2 July when the sun only dips below the horizon so the night sky remains bright. A perfect base while enjoying this and the rest of St Petersburg's delights is the

stylish Grand Hotel - central, characterful, and boasting a superh caviar bar belmond.com/grand-hoteleurope-st-petersburg

#### THE HOLLYWOOD HIDEOUT

**Chateau Marmont** 8221 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90046

+1 323 656 1010

The World's Coolest Hotelier™ André Balazs (Ba-lash, remember) can be found mainly at London's Chiltern Firehouse. but back in those unthinkable days when that was still a fire station he had the Chateau Marmont, the legendary West Hollywood outpost that has hosted everyone who's anyone since 1930. Since Balazs took over in 1990, a never-ending pantheon of his friends - A-list celebrities all - have made it their home (literally, in the case of Rick Rubin, who moved in for nine months). Book into room 64 (the double-bedroom penthouse favoured by Howard Hughes), grab a seat at the bar and don't stare chateaumarmont.com

#### THE HOTEL THAT'S **THE BUSINESS**

Palace Hotel Tokyo 1-1-1 Marunouchi. Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0005, Japan

+81 3 3211 5211

"Omotenashi", the Japanese concept of hospitality, is the central ethos of this 290-room hotel equipped for business and pleasure. Having only just opened in 2012 and located in the prestigious Marunouchi district, next to the Imperial Palace Gardens (and situated on a moat, incidentally) it's also a destination for global gastronomes with seven noted restaurants serving Japanese, Chinese, French and international cuisine. It's home to

the Evian Tokyo Spa from where, on a clear day, the magnificent Mt Fuii can be glimpsed. From £210 per night en.palacehoteltokyo.com

#### THE SAFEST HAVEN

The Upper House Pacific Place, 88 Queensway, Hong Kong +852 2918 1938

Balance and harmony are key to the feel of this renowned hotel by wunderkind designer André Fu, which occupies the ton 13 floors of a 50-storey tower. It's a sanctuary of calm from arrival, there's no traditional lobby (quests check in via iPad). and very little clutter. Turn on the out-of-office and breathe out. From £420 per night upperhouse.com

#### 033

#### THE GRANDEST **HONEYMOON SUITE**

**Aman Canal Grande Hotel** Palazzo Papadopoli. Calle Tiepolo 1364, Sestiere San Polo, Venezia 30125, Italy

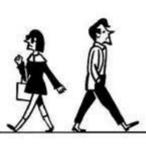
+ 39 041 2707 333

This 16th-century Venetian palazzo is now the idvllic hotel where Mr and Mrs Clooney spent their wedding night, in the Alcova Tiepolo Suite, a grand room with Chinoiserie murals and a fresco by Rococo painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. When staying, stroll in the secluded garden, negroni in hand. It's what the Clooneys would want. Rooms from £690: Alcova Tiepolo Suite, £2,950 per night amanresorts.com

#### THE MOST ECLECTIC CLUB

Club Silencio 142, Rue Montmartre Paris +33 1 40 13 12 33

David Lynch's Parisian nightclub is named after the venue in the



2001 classic Mulholland Drive. The real-life Silencio is a subterranean enclave with a no-photos-no-phones policy. It's an otherworldly, theatrical cocktail bar with a cinema, library and "dream forest". Everything, including the Fifties-inspired furniture, is designed by Lynch. Members-only until midnight, after which mortals are allowed in though only, a la Studio 54, those the doormen deem worthy. silencio-club.com

#### 035 -

# THE HOTTEST TIP IN NEW YORK

Carson Street Clothiers 63 Crosby Street, New York 10012, United States, As recommended by Luca Rubinacci

+1 212 925 2627

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"I travel to New York every two months, but for me it's best in summer. One of my favourite things is a nice walk through SoHo, down Mercer Street where everyone dresses very well. a very preppy and stylish place. And there is a men's clothing shop in particular I usually pop by, on Crosby Street, called Carson Street Clothiers. They have a great selection and it constantly changes." The expertly-curated store offers a full range of men's clothing, from shoes to shirts to suiting to accessories, and a personal shopping service." carsonstreetclothiers.com

#### 036

#### THE TALLEST BUILDING

The Burj Khalifa 1 Mohammed Bin Rashid Boulevard, Downtown Dubai, UAE +971 4888 8124

From the outdoor observation deck at the Burj Khalifa, 555m up on Level 148, the views of Dubai are unsurprisingly astonishing. (At 829.8m, it's currently the tallest building on Earth, the tallest free-standing structure, claims the highest occupied floor plus a number of other records.) It houses offices, an Armani hotel, 900 flats and suites, library, cigar club and gournet market. In other words, it makes The Shard look a little, well, amateur. Live the high life. burikhalifa.ae/en

#### 037

#### THE COSIEST ROOMS

Ett Hem Sköldungagatan 2, 114 27 Stockholm, Sweden

+46 8 20 05 90

Swedish for "A Home", the boutique Ett Hem offers 12 beautifully-appointed rooms with the emphasis on quests treating the hotel like it's their house. Help yourself to food and drink from the kitchen's well-stocked fridges, relax in the extensive library or the greenhouse overlooking the garden. Each room has its own cocktail cabinet, and the Relax Room offers a traditional Swedish sauna. It will physically anger you to leave From £292 per night etthem.se

#### 038

# THE MOST AMAZING AMPHITHEATRE

Arena di Verona Via Roma 7/d, 37121 Verona, Italy

Dating from the first century, the Arena di Verona has hosted innumerable operas, ballets, plays — and Elton John (more recently than 1AD, we might add). The magnificent arena remains a spectacular site for opera, due to splendid acoustics. This year Don Giovanni, Nabucco, Aida and Tosca will all be staged in the open air. Dress formally for front seats and bring pillows for the stone steps (though wear what you like).

#### 039

#### THE CLASSIEST CABARET

Clärchens Ballhaus Auguststr 24, 10117 Berlin, Germany

+49 30 28 29 29 5

An East Berlin cabaret institution still going strong more than 100 years after it opened in 1913, it attracts a vibrant audience of all ages. Older couples waltz or tango while younger groups come for the beer, lively atmosphere and music from the live band. After you've danced up a storm, refuel in the candle-lit Spiegelsaal (Mirror Hall), with generous signature German and Italian dishes. ballhaus.delen

#### 040

#### THE ULTIMATE SHOP

10 Corso Como 20124 Milan, Italy

Founded in 1990 by gallerist Carla Sozzani, formerly of Italian Elle and Vogue Italia, 10 Corso Como is a high-end store fusing art, fashion, dining, bazaar shopping and a micro hotel (with just three suites) into something which, it claims, "marks the beginning of total shopping". Stocking innovative brands such as Comme des Garçons and Maison Martin Margiela, there's also outlets in Shanghai and Beijing.

#### 041

#### THE SUPREME SUNDAE

Serendipity 3 225 East 60th Street, New York, NY 10022

10corsocomo.com

When ice cream must be ordered 48 hours in advance so that special ingredients can be flown in to make it, you know you've got a serious dessert. Serendipity 3's Golden Opulence Sundae lives up to its name and, at \$1,000, holds the Guinness World Record for most expensive sundae. Five scoops of rich

Tahitian vanilla bean ice-cream are doused in Amedi Porcelana luxury chocolate syrup, covered in 23-carat edible gold leaf, gold-covered almonds and served with a tiny pot of Grand Passion caviar, a dessert variety (you know, a dessert caviar). Remarkably, the restaurant claims to sell one a month. serendipity3.com

#### 042

# THE FLOATING FLOWER MARKET

Bloemenmarkt Singel canal, 1071 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Moored on the Singel canal since 1862, Amsterdam's Bloemenmarkt is Holland's best known flower market and the world's only floating one. It's a fragrant, beautiful attraction, and flowers are available from its houseboat stalls year round. Tulips are plentiful, but there's also a huge range of bulbs, flowers, plants and seeds. amsterdam.info/shopping/flowermarket

#### 043

#### THE MONUMENTAL CHURCH

La Sagrada Família Carrer de Mallorca, 401, 08013 Barcelona, Spain

· (+34) 93 198 07 05

Enormous, unfinished masterpiece of Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí built in a combination of gothic and curvilinear Art Nouveau styles, though debate rages over how it should be completed. Estimates suggest work may finish in 2026 (the centenary of Gaudi's death); it will have 18 spires representing Matthew. Mark, Luke, John, all 12 apostles, the Virgin Mary and Christ. In the meantime, visit, take the guided tour, and wonder at the spectacle of it all. sagradafamilia.cat





# THE MOST INCREDIBLE GARDENS

Gardens By The Bay 18 Marina Gardens Drive, 018953 Singapore +65 6420 6848

1000

An extraordinary 100ha of multi-level botanical futurism where indoor gardens simulate eight climates for more than 250,000 rare plant species, plus it has the world's largest indoor waterfall. Seek out the Flower Dome (dry Mediterranean climate), Cloud Forest (tropical) and the 25–50m high vertical gardens of Supertree Grove. Navigate the sprawling grounds with a bespoke map app. gardensbythebay.com.sg

#### 045

# THE LOVELIEST LEIPÄJUUSTO

Kauppatori Eteläsatama, FI-00170, Helsinki, Finland +358 9 3102 3565

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Leipäjuusto — cheese made from the rich milk of a cow that has recently calved — is but one of the delicacies available at the renowned Helsinki harbour market, Kauppatori. Go there to sample the region's cloudberries, blueberries, reindeer meatballs and copious excellent fish such as smoked whitefish, Baltic herring, trout and salmon. visithelsinki.fi/en/sights-and-attractions/market-square

#### 046

#### THE FINEST CHOCOLATE

Knipschildt Chocolatier 12 South Main St, Norwalk, Connecticut 06854, USA

Those who find themselves in Connecticut with a sweet tooth and too much money (a quite specific set of circumstances, admittedly) should head for Knipschildt Chocolatier and its 2in La Madeline au Truffle which, at £160, is the most expensive single chocolate in the world. A rare French Perigord truffle is its centre, surrounded by ganache, enrobed in dark French Valrhona chocolate, dusted in cocoa powder and set on a bed of sugar pearls. knipschildt.net

#### 047 -

# THE ULTIMATE DÉGUSTATION

L'Arpege 84 Rue de Varenne, 75007 Paris, France +33 1 47 05 09 06

+33 | 47

It's not difficult to eat well in Paris, but triple Michelin-starred chef Alain Passard's L'Arpege offers a particular culinary spectacle. His restaurant emphasises herbs and vegetables and there's no better way to experience his cuisine than the celebrated menu dégustation. In among the heavenly greenery, look out for Passard's chaud-froid d'oeuf, hot and cold egg served with maple syrup.

#### 048

# THE SPECTACULAR SAUNA

Hotel Prima 52-3 Cheongdam-dong, Gangnam-gu

+82 2 6006 9114

A jjimjilbang, traditional Korean bathhouse, is a rather different affair to what we consider to be a Western spa. It will likely be gender segregated, and feature a hanjeungmak, an intensely dry sauna heated by braziers of burning pinewood, plus the option for a vigorous scrub massage. The Poseidon Spa at the luxurious Hotel Prima in Gangnam also features an outdoor hot spring, a cold tub and a sleeping room, which claims boldly to offer "snoring-prevention beds". prima.co.kr

#### 049

# THE MOST PROFLIGATE PIZZA

Nino's 1354 1st Avenue, New York, NY 10021 +1 212 988 0002

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Nino Selimaj's eponymous Italian restaurant, the piano bar and celebrity hangout frequented by Tony Bennett, Clint Eastwood and the late James Gandolfini, is a bona-fide culinary destination in its own right. There is another compelling reason to visit: its Bellissima Pizza is topped with lobster, creme fraiche, wasabi paste and six types of caviar.

#### 050

# **THE MOST EXTREME CLUB**Berghain

Am Wriezener Bahnhof, 10243 Berlin, Germany

This infamous temple of techno is nigh-on impossible to get into, albeit in a pleasingly egalitarian way. There's no queue jump, no special treatment, certainly no "table service": no faux-VIP preposterousness. What you get is a former power station with an exceptional sound system, an unsurpassed DJ line-up, and a community of clubbers who think nothing of pulling a 24-hour stint. Aficionados go on Sunday mornings when the tourists have left and the truly hardcore are just getting warmed up. €14, berghain.de

#### 051

# THE COOLEST CATHEDRAL

III. nádvoří 48/2, 119 01 Prague 1, Czech Republic

Breathtaking, neo-Gothic cathedral in the sprawling grounds of Prague Castle (which, itself, contains eight gardens, four palaces and three other churches). Dominating the skyline, it's Prague's grandest holy site, and has seen the coronation of numerous Czech

kings and queens (many of whom rest in the royal tombs beneath). Climb the 287-steps up the 90m tower; the view is spectacular and it houses Žikmund, a 16th century bell, the largest in the Czech Republic. Ding dong.

#### 052

# THE MOST GLORIOUS GALLERY

Merrion Square West Dublin 2, Ireland

+353 1 661 5133

Dublin: come for the craic, stay for the paintings. An oft-overlooked itinerary-item in the city, the National Gallery is an invaluable repository of globally important artwork, containing more than 14,000 pieces. Many are by Irish artists, including romantic painter James Barry, Impressionist Roderic O'Conor, and acclaimed photographer and visual artist Kevin Abosch. nationalgallery.ie









#### UNITED KINGDOM

#### Poker, Grands Prix and your own private castle for the ultimate staycation

#### 053

#### THE BRILLIANT **BEACHERONT**

The Pig on the Beach Manor House, Manor Road, Studland, Dorset +44 19 2945 0288

The people behind much-loved Brockenhurst hotel The Pig (as well as its porcine siblings in Southampton and Bath) have opened an establishment on the Dorset coastline. The National Trust property, formerly the Manor House Hotel, offers 23 bedrooms in The Pig's signature relaxed. homely style. The "25-mile menu" is an ethical foodie's dream (nigh-on everything is sourced from within that perimeter) and the young, friendly staff are immediately welcoming. From £139 per night thepighotel.com

#### 054

#### THE A-LISTER'S FAVOURITE

Chiltern Firehouse 1 Chiltern St. Marylebone, London +44 20 7073 7676

Though diary columns in which it features tend to read like slightly hysterical celebrity fan fiction, the Chiltern Firehouse is real. and it is possible to go there, albeit with varying difficulty (just turn up for breakfast, book in advance for lunch, and pretend you're a foreign dignitary for a non-humiliating table at dinner). Proprietor André Balazs has a Midas touch, and his Marylebone hotel (it's not just a restaurant) really is the business. Portuguese head chef Nuno Mendes' fare is a compelling attraction, but the magic of the Chiltern Firehouse will always be in the unrivalled

throng of celebrities who gather to dine, frolic and enjoy the secret smoking room or the VVIP bar. In the summer, it will be easier to get in as the beautiful people float off around the globe. chilternfirehouse.com

#### THE FINEST **RIVERSIDE RETREAT**

The Savoy Strand, Savoy Way, London +44207 836 4343

Little could be more conducive to experiencing the delights of the capital in full summer bloom than a stay at The Savoy, which has set the standard for luxury hotels since 1899. Its suites, with their views of the Thames, are, of course, the smart choice Following a long day exploring the city, wind down at the world-class Beaufort Bar (with its new, beautifully-rendered pop-up menus designed by head bartender Chris Moore). From £400 per night fairmont.com/savoy-london

#### 056

#### THE COUNTRY CLASSIC

**Hambleton Hall** Oakham, Rutland +44 1572 756991

For over 30 years, the rambling and revered country house hotel has been run to the very highest standards by Tim and Stefa Hart (parents of Sam and Eddie of London's Quo Vadis and Barrafina), holding its Michelin star since 1982. Former Lehman Brothers banker Tim gave up the City for country pursuits, thus Hambleton Hall is not only set in acres of bucolic English countryside, overlooking the

Rutland Water reservoir, it's also perfectly suited to shooting. The Buckminster, Blatherwycke, Belvoir and Burghley shoots, among others, are nearby. From £265 per night hambletonhall.com

#### 057

#### THE MODERN CLASSIC

The Beaumont 8 Balderton Street, **Brown Hart Gardens** Mayfair, London +44 20 7499 1001

Restaurateurs Chris Corbin and Jeremy King continue to confidently lead the way, gliding effortlessly into the hotel business with their debut Mayfair offering. As with past successes (which include The Wolseley, The Delaunay, and more recently Fischer's in Marylebone), the duo have once again succeeded in opening a venue that feels immediately like it has been an integral part of the fabric of London. The Beaumont drips with Twenties New York-style art-deco glamour; its American Bar mixes an immaculate Negroni: its Colony Grill restaurant has vaulted to the forefront of London's fashionable dining rooms; and the "Room" suite lets those who want to sleep within a giant sculpture of a crouching man created by Antony Gormley (a hitherto untapped market). From £395 per night thebeaumont.com

#### THE PLACE IN THE WOODS

The Lime Wood Hotel Lime Wood, Beaulieu Rd. Lyndhurst, Hampshire +44 23 8028 7177

A stunning Regency country house that was originally a hunting lodge in the 13th century. Lime Wood offers the chance of a leafy escape to the New Forest. The dog-friendly residence offers amenities

both rustic (forest foraging) and

high-end (there's a helipad), while restaurant Hartnett Holder & Co provides locally sourced British cuisine under the auspices of the eminent Angela Hartnett and Lime Wood's own Luke Holder. From £255 per night limewoodhotel co.uk

#### 059

#### THE CLASSIEST CASINO

Victoria Casino I ondon 150-162 Edgware Road, London As recommended by

Mr Chow, restaurateur

"I like poker and when I come to London in the summer. I visit the Victoria Casino to play a game called Omaha. The casino has hosted some of Europe's biggest poker tours, and also holds regular tournaments. By the way. President Obama came to my house and he spoke to me about poker. I hate dropping names. and Lady Gaga agrees with me." grosvenorvictoriacasino.com

#### THE MOST EXCITING **HORSE RIDING**

Equestrian Escapes Tarporley, Cheshire +44 1829 781123

Experienced horsey types and equine novices alike are welcome at Equestrian Escapes' riding holidays, which combine riding with beautiful surroundings (and just enough time to relax). The company offers trips to locations around the world, including Portugal, France and Peru, but the opportunity to ride on the sandy beaches of Cornwall is hard to beat. The eight-day-long trip features five days of riding, and includes countryside hacks and showjumping as well as plenty of time on the beach. Should you wish to take your own horse, they'll arrange it. Cornwall: £275 for 2 nights, £585 for 7 nights equestrian-escapes.com









#### THE BEST INN

The Olde Bell High Street, Hurley, Berkshire +44 16 2882 5881

There's something extraordinarily comforting and relaxing about staying at The Olde Bell, with its oak floorboards, crooked ceilings and claw-footed baths. While parts of the inn date from 1135, outside the comfort of your cosy room, the grounds of the inn are well worth exploring, too. Pop into the 16th-century Tithe Barn and take a look at the Malt House, with its Garden Room (replete with inglenook fireplace). Music Room (with grand piano, naturally) and Drawing Room (large and impressive). At dinner, there's herbs and vegetables grown in the inn's own gardens. and in summer a rotisserie, kamado oven and grill can all be found in operation outside. From £59 per night theoldebell.co.uk

#### 062

#### THE SMARTEST **TOWN HOUSE**

The Zetter Townhouse Marylebone, 28-30 Seymour Street, London +44 20 7324 4567

Marylebone continues to "happen" with the arrival of a Zetter Townhouse, a crosstown sibling to the bizarre but brilliant boutique hotel in Clerkenwell. Again, Russell Sage has been drafted in to provide the characterful, maximalist interiors; whereas the Clerkenwell Townhouse embodies the spirit of a notional Great Aunt Wilhelmina, the new place has been designed in the spirit of a wicked Uncle Seymour, and the Georgian house is full of keepsakes from their Grand Tour together. Bonkers, yes, but the Townhouse is no gimmick food is by acclaimed chef Bruno Loubet, the drinks menu in the

cocktail lounge (which is known as Seymour's Parlour) comes courtesy of bona-fide alcohol deity Tony Conigliaro, while the hotel features 21 rooms. two suites and a rooftop apartment with private staircase. From £282 per night thezettertownhouse.com

#### 063

#### THE FIRST-RATE TOUR

Luxury Tours of Britain Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Castle +44 208 242 6712

Visit Stratford-upon-Avon and explore the life of The Bard in historically accurate style (albeit from the comfort of a historically inaccurate luxury Mercedes-Benz van). The trip is entirely customisable, but one has the option of visiting Shakespeare's birthplace, the grammar school he (probably) attended, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the cottage of his wife Anne Hathaway (to whom he bequeathed, famously, his "second-best bed").

#### 064

#### THE SPORTIEST SCOTTISH ROOM

**Cromlix Hotel** Kinbuck, near Dunblane, Perthshire, Scotland +44 17 8682 2125

£1,120 for up to 6 passengers

luxurytoursofbritain.com

Beginning his inevitable transition from Wimbledon winner to hotel management, Andy Murray has purchased and revitalised Cromlix, a stunning Victorian mansion set over 34 acres of beautifully secluded woodland near his childhood hometown of Dunblane. The hotel offers a well-equipped games room, a truly magnificent Chez Roux restaurant, fishing on the hotel's private loch and tennis (well, quite). Ace. From £250 per night cromlix.com

#### 065

#### THE SPEEDIEST DAY OUT

**British Grand Prix** Silverstone Circuit,

Towcester, Northamptonshire

This year, the British Grand Prix at Silverstone is on 3-5 July, when the world's best drivers will arrive in Northamptonshire to race a scorching 52 laps around one of the fastest F1 tracks in the world. The oldest race in the calendar begins with a Thursday concert and ends with a now-legendary Sunday after-party. It's well worth attending, whether simply dropping by with a day pass or experiencing the weekend in all its glory with the F1 Paddock Club (which offers views overlooking the main start/finish straight, as well as fine dining throughout the day and a champagne bar). Incidentally, the iconic track is also available for private hire, so that's something to think about. From £67 per day, £155 for race day (Sunday) silverstone.co.uk

#### 066 -

#### THE BEST BOAT

**Beacon Park Boats** Llanfoist Wharf, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire +44 1873 858277

In today's overly health-andsafety conscious world, it's refreshing to know that one can hire a luxury narrowboat and promptly start messing about on it with no experience whatsoever. Beacon Park Boats is a family owned company that has designed and built its entire fleet of 13 canal boats, which sleep between two and seven people (plus up to two dogs - they even throw in a "dog towel", which is both practical and rather charming). Pootle along the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal on your boat, enjoying both the rolling countryside and your vessel's facilities. Depending on which you choose, you may find yourself with a wood-burning

stove, home cinema or fourposter bed. 3 nights for 2 people from £795, £1120 for a week beaconparkboats.com

#### THE FINEST STALKING

**Remony Estate** Remony, Aberfeldy, Perthshire, Scotland +44 1887 830209

What does 1 April signify? Why, the start of deerstalking season at the Remony Estate, of course! The Highland estate's primary business is hill farming, and is home to plentiful ewes and cattle on 3,000ha of land owned and managed by the Duncan Miller family since 1925. Remony also offers the Lochtay Lodges to hunting enthusiasts. There is salmon and trout fishing on the loch, grouse shooting on the heather moorlands and pheasant shooting on its lower slopes. Roe bucks and (from 1 July) red stags can be stalked on the open hill. lochtaylodges.co.uk

#### 068

#### **THE MOST AGREEABLE PICNIC**

Glyndebourne Lewes, East Sussex +44 12 7381 5000

From 21 May to 30 August. the Glyndebourne Festival will present six productions in its 1.200-seat opera house. Performances include Bizet's Carmen, conducted by Jakub Hrůša, Mozart's light-hearted Singspiel Die Entführung Aus Dem Serail, featuring star soprano Sally Matthews, and a Glyndebourne debut of Handel's great English oratorio Saul. Glyndebourne's famous picnics can be pre-ordered - three courses with champagne - and come with porter service and furniture. Formalwear is expected during Festival season (you can go casual the rest of the year). glyndebourne.com









# THE PETROLHEAD'S PARADISE

Goodwood Festival of Speed Chichester, West Sussex

+44 12 4375 5055

The 12,000-acre West Sussex site comes into its own with motor racing. The Goodwood Festival of Speed (25–28 June) celebrates motor sport with hill climbing, rally driving, 4x4 driving and high-tech driving simulators. This year's theme is "Flat-out and Fearless: Racing on the Edge". From £260 per person for the three-day weekend. £99 for the Friday and £123 each for the Saturday and Sunday goodwood.com

#### 070

#### THE BEST WAVES

Extreme Academy Watergate Bay, Cornwall +44 1637 860840

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Ride a gnarly tube or three at Watergate Bay, where the sick surf is always going off. Ahem. The academy inducts you into surfing (wetsuit-included) with lessons. Start as a quimby, but by the end you'll be ripping it. Tubular. extremeacademy.co.uk

#### 071

# THE FINEST BEACH HOUSE

Boutique Retreats Leslie House, Lady Street, Helston, Cornwall +44 18 72 55 3491

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Since 2007, this company has offered an array of weekend properties, 36 of which are on or near a beach, all immaculately-kept, well appointed and offering a characterful hotel alternative. The Cuttlefish property, located in Cornwall's gloriously named harbour town of Mousehole, offers a triple-tiered garden. Cuttlefish: from £730 for a long weekend in winter, £2,601 for a week in summer boutique-retreats.co.uk

#### 072

# THE BEST BIKE RIDE

Italian vintage cycling festival L'Eroica (which of course means "heroes") has made its way to the UK. Taking place between 19-21 June, Eroica Britannia offers three cycling routes along the Peak District of between 30 and 100 miles, as well as live music, vintage clothes stalls, food. Pimm's, camping and general good festival vibes. The requirements? A pre-1987 road bike (replete with downtube shifters and over-the-handlehar brake cables) and a penchant for vintage (video footage suggests it is literally impossible to "put too much effort in", on this front). eroicabritannia.co.uk

#### 073

#### THE ENGLISHMAN'S (HOLIDAY) HOME THAT'S ALSO HIS CASTLE (TOWER)

Peverell's Tower English Heritage Holiday Cottage, Dover

+44 37 0333 1181

Dover Castle was founded in the 12th century by Henry II and updated in the 20th century to keep abreast of Britain's military engagements (it was the headquarters of the "miracle of Dunkirk" evacuation of the British Army in 1940). Now, you can stay there. Or, rather, you can stay in a bit of it. Peverell's Tower has retained a remarkable number of its original 13th-century features. including graffiti thought to be the work of a 16th-century prisoner. The tower offers a courtyard, two floors and a roof terrace (with superlative views of the unspoilt rolling English countryside) but, this being English Heritage, the real joy is in strolling around the castle grounds, which you're free to do at the end of the day when visitors have been shooed away. From £681 per week english-heritage.org.uk

#### 074

# THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE (AROUND THE UK)

Land Rover Adventure Travel +44 12 4285 1811

Luxury travel specialists Abercrombie & Kent have a long association with Land Rover (A&K founder Geoffrey Kent set it up in 1962 with little more than "a Land Rover adapted with refrigeration and a silver ice bucket"), and the two companies now offer meticulously planned drives all over the world. Its UK trip, though not as exotic as the Botswanan or Tanzanian drives. nonetheless offers a superlative five-night tour around our green and pleasant land - the July jaunt, takes in the Wimbledon Men's Quarter Finals and a stay at The Savoy. From £7,495 per person,

abercrombiekent.co.uk

#### 075

# THE PERFECT GARDEN PARTY

**Unique Home Stays** 

"We don't class ourselves as holiday home providers, but luxury private-home custodians." says Sarah Stanley, director of Unique Home Stays. This slightly mind-boggling claim is given credence when one explores the vast array of hugely desirable holiday homes - sorry, luxury private homes - that the company offers. Garden lovers are particularly well catered for, with beautiful properties set on acres of unspoilt countryside in locations across the UK - "Puddleduck" in Devon and

"Little Otterling" in Cornwall's Tamar Valley are both particularly winning — but the website also allows holidaymakers to customise their property search to include saunas, tennis courts, helipads, and other perfectly reasonable requests. Little Otterling: from £650 per week. Puddleduck: £695 per week uniquehomestays.com

#### 076

#### THE GREATEST VIEW

The Boundary Rooftop Bar & Grill Entrance in Redchurch Street, 2–4 Boundary Street, Shoreditch, London +44 20 7729 1051

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Sir Terence Conran's triumphant Shoreditch hotel-cum-shopcum-restaurant is a worthy travel destination all year round (in particular, the Sir David Tang-designed Modern Chinoiserie is a gloriously elegant place to stay the night), but in the warmer months its rooftop bar truly comes into its own. With panoramic views of the East London rooftops, and a working kitchen garden, the bar serves up steaks and oysters from the Rooftop Grill, plus expertly-made (and properly punchy) cocktails. In a nod to the realities of English summertime, the rooftop also comes with a weatherproof pergola, and blankets for all who need them. Rooms from £220 per night

Rooms from £220 per night theboundary.co.uk

#### 077

#### THE HONOURABLE MENTION

The Club Hotel & Spa Green Street, St Helier, Jersey

+44 15 3487 6500

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OK, fine, it's not technically in the UK. But Jersey's Club Hotel & Spa is well worth a visit, regardless of historical geographical distinctions (it's a British Crown Dependency, incidentally). The boutique hotel's restaurant, Bohemia, is Michelin-starred (secure a chef's table seat for a glimpse into head chef Steve Smith's immaculately run kitchen). Its spa is excellent for the Gentleman's Spa Tonic all-in-one reviver, while there's also an indoor salt water pool and "herbal" steam room, Jersey in the summer offers festivals of food, motoring and boating, too. Rooms from £125 per night theclubjersey.com





#### **PARADISE**

#### Suites, spas and private islands for getting away from it all

#### 078

#### THE BEST LAGOON

**Banvan Tree** 33, 33/27 Moo 4, Srisoonthorn Road. Cherngtalay, Amphur Talang Phuket 83110, Thailand +66 76 372 400

Once an abandoned 400ha tin mine, Laguna Phuket now houses dazzling high-end villas and hotels. The breathtaking Banyan Tree is a complex of luxury villas, each with private pools, set in tranquil surroundings beside a lagoon. Bicycles are provided to ride between the spa, restaurants and beach. You really won't want to leave. Lagoon Villa from £660 per night banvantree.com

#### 079

#### A PRIVATE CASTLE OF **YOUR OWN**

The Carnegie Club Skibo Castle, Dornoch, Scotland

+44 1862 894 600

Fittingly, a castle once owned by the world's richest man (19th-century industrialist Andrew Carnegie) is now probably the world's most expensive club. The Carnegie's joining fee of £24,000 and annual membership of £7,690 buys access to an unparalleled haven of discrete luxury: extraordinarily attentive service, superb 6,833 yard championship links golf course, trap and pheasant shooting and an alarm-clock call at 8am every morning (the bagpiper who plays outside). Non-members can visit once, and once only. Be quick: the club is currently accepting applications. carnegieclub.co.uk

#### 080

#### THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Southern Patagonia As recommended by Mehmet

Ali, design director, Hardy Amies

"Southern Patagonia, Chile. It's beautifully epic. I love its 'frontier' feel which is due to it being so scarcely populated. The combination of the Andes mountains, deserts and rivers are a heady mix." chile.travel/en

#### 081

#### THE SPA WITHIN A SPA

Kempinski Hotel Barbaros Bay, Kizilagac Koyu Gerenkuyu Mevkii Yaliciftlik. 48400 Bodrum

+90 252 3110 303

Deniz Susever invented underwater yoga and teaches it as well as reiki, meditation and watsu (a water/shiatsu fusion) at this hotel's renowned spa, where she's consultant practitioner. The 5,500sq m spa also offers Ayurvedic treatments, massages, hammam, sauna and steamroom accessed via the private spa suite - a spa-within-a-spa. Rooms from £150 per night kempinski.com

#### 082

#### THE STARRIEST ISLAND

**Tetiaroa Atoll** Arue Tahiti, PO Box 6014 Faa'a. 98702 Tahiti, French Polynesia +689 40 866 366

Known as The Brando Resort, Tetiaora Atoll was formerly Marlon's private Tahitian

paradise, which he acquired in 1966 after falling for it while filming Mutiny on the Bounty. Via a 20-minute flight from Papeete, the eco-friendly 35-villa resort offers white beaches, electric blue sea, coral reefs and unmatched privacy. "Tetiaroa is beautiful beyond my capacity to describe," said the man himself. "Tetiaroa is the tincture of the South Seas." Quite. Villas from £2.210 per day thebrando.com

#### 083

#### THE COSTLIEST SUITE

Hotel President Wilson 47 Quai Wilson, Geneva 1211, Switzerland +800 325 45454

The Swiss do expensive well, and the Royal Penthouse Suite at the Hotel President Wilson is the world's priciest hotel suite. The eighth floor accommodations comprise 12 luxury bedrooms with matching marble bathrooms, terrace with views of the lake and Alps, gym, Steinway grand piano, billiards table, chef, PA, butler, private lift - and bulletproof windows. While you can't put a price on happiness, staying here comes in at £39,000 a night.

#### 084

#### THE ULTIMATE BACCHANAL

Cavas Wine Lodge Costaflores, Alto Agrelo, Mendoza, Argentina +54 261 410 6927

hotelpresidentwilson.com

From a luxury lodge at the foothills of the Andes, wine-lovers can explore the Mendoza valley's 900 wineries producing some of the world's finest Malbec. Your hosts will arrange tastings of this array of ultra-premium wines, most only a short drive away. The menu at the lodge's own restaurant changes every four months, to match the season, and there's also a lavish spa. From £455 per night

cavaswinelodge.com

#### 085

#### THE BALLOON **WITH BUBBLES**

**Bath Balloons** 3 Edgar Buildings, George Street, Bath +44 12 2546 6888

Fancy quaffing champagne in a basket gliding over the British countryside? Well, Bath Balloons have combined the two into one such activity. It doesn't just fly from Bath, either: their bubbly-fuelled flights depart from bucolic locations including the verdant Usk and Wye Valleys on the Welsh borders. The policy of champagne on all flights, morning or evening, is strictly adhered to. Flight from £105 per person bathballoons.co.uk

#### 086

#### THE JET SET LUNCH

Jet Escapes Ltd PO Box 66063 London +44 20 87 421 300

A long, Michelin-starred lunch in Strasbourg, Paris, the Côte d'Azur, Florence or Monte Carlo might reasonably be considered indulgent enough on its own, but the "Indulgent Lunches" offered by Jet Escapes up the ante further via the not-inconsiderable addition of a private jet (the biggest of which, the Falcon 2000, can accommodate up to 17 people in total luxury). For a set price, your party can enjoy an all-inclusive jaunt across the Channel and back again (with that world class lunch, to boot). The Monte Carlo option, which includes lunch at Alain Ducasse's thrice-starred Le Louis XV, also includes a helicopter transfer from Nice airport (for those world-weary travellers iaded by the notion of travelling to lunch via only one type of private aircraft, presumably). From £1,060pp, for a party of 6 jetescapes.co.uk



#### THE SAFEST CHALET

Chalet N Oberlech 50, A-6764 Lech, Austria

43 5 5833 7900

"Your most valuable asset - your time - will be filled with sweet memories that will last for many vears. Maybe even forever." so says the website for Chalet N, the most expensive rental chalet in the world. It will set you back £231.088 for a week's visit. For that you get spectacular winter scenery: it overlooks the slopes of Oberlech, down the valley from Lech in the Australian Alps. Then there's the stuff you get inside: the cutlery is made from titanium and the pillows are embroidered with your initials. There's a spa bigger than a tennis court, the pool changes colour depending on your mood and the windows are bulletproof. The 26 staff include chalet manager, chef. concierge, butler and chef two more than it sleeps. chalet-n.com

#### 088

# THE TOTALLY MINT POLO EXPERIENCE

British Polo Day

+44 20 7352 0340

A globetrotting polo-celebrationcum-philanthropic-movementcum-networking-event, British Polo Days now take place all around the world, in locations including China, Mexico, India, Dubai and Australia (and. occasionally, Britain). The aim is "a celebration of luxury in a polo network that spans the world". The net result is a busy annual itinerary of glossy events at which British Polo Day's faithful attendees mingle with the great and the good of both the host nation to quaff champagne, enjoy a slap-up meal, fundraise for charity and quietly do business. And enjoy some polo, obviously. Invitation only britishpoloday.com

#### 089

#### A TRIP DOWN THE DANUBE

The Luxury Cruise Company +44 80 0319 6660

At 1,914km, the Danube is the EU's longest river, and from its source in Germany's Black Forest it passes through four capital cities and the borders of 10 countries before reaching the Black Sea. None of which, of course, speaks to the beauty and majesty of the river, which can be best appreciated from a boat - such as one of the spacious, well-appointed longships offered by Viking River Cruises. Their eight-day exploration of the Danube begins in Budapest, heads through Vienna and ends in Nuremberg, taking in opera houses, palaces, cathedrals and Benedictine abbeys. Old Europe at its finest. From £1.145 vikingrivercruises.co.uk

#### 090

#### THE GREATEST SECLUSION

Song Saa, Cambodia +855 236 860 360

Come for the complete seclusion, stay for the restaurant on stilts. Contrary to how it's marketed, Song Saa isn't actually a private island - it's two private islands ("Song Saa" is, of course, Khmer for "The Sweethearts"), namely Koh Ouen and Koh Bong, which are connected by a footbridge. The resort, developed by couple Rory and Melita Hunter, is located in a staggeringly beautiful 200ha marine reserve, and offers its guests discrete but friendly service. Cambodian cuisine, spa areas and a host of water sports - most notably night-time swimming in the island's spectacular, bioluminescent waters. Its villas feature jungle and ocean views and are all built from sustainable materials. To help you relax even more, everything's all-inclusive. From £734 per night songsaa.com

#### 091

#### THE JOLLY GOOD TIME

Trident Hotel Anchovy, Port Antonio, PO Box 7312, Portland, Jamaica +1 876 633 7000

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It's not particularly surprising that legendary hell-raiser Errol Flynn had his own house band. What is slightly surprising is that some are still alive, and that they continue to play at the Trident Hotel in Jamaica. Known as The Jolly Boys, they have been playing their brand of mento music (the precursor to ska and reggae) since 1955. There is much else to recommend the hotel - the private beach, its 13 ocean-front villas, and Mike's Supper Club which offers a slick speakeasy-style cabaret lounge with lush decor and a Ferrari-red 1917 Steinway baby grand piano but go for the Jolly Boys. Quick. From £600 per night tridentportantonio.com

#### 092

#### THE HOME FROM HOME

Sugar Beach St Lucia, Val des Pitons, PO Box 251, Soufriere, Saint Lucia +1758 456 8000

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Red flags are often raised at the multi-award-winning Sugar Beach in St Lucia - luckily, this is merely a means of hailing a waiter to order cocktails and food while relaxing on the beach. The stylish Viceroy Resortoperated hotel makes good use of its flawless Caribbean beachfront, with activities including snorkelling, scuba diving, wakeboarding and windsurfing. Between the sea. the rainforest and the personalised butler service, you may not want to leave, in which case it might be time to consider the next logical step - adding a Sugar Beach property to your portfolio, and moving in. From £1 575 viceroyhotelsandresorts.com

#### 093

# THE RETREAT Anavilhanas Jungle Lodge

In the county of Novo Airão, 110km north-west of Manaus, on the right margin of Rio Negro in the Amazon rainforest Switch on the out-of-office alert and retreat deep into the Amazonian jungle with a trip organised by tailor-made holiday experts Scott Dunn who know a thing or two (or three) about luxury travel. A visit to the Anavilhanas Jungle Lodge takes some determination - it's an "11 hour 30 minute international flight to São Paulo, three-hour 50 minute domestic flight to Manaus and 30 minute seaplane transfer or three-hour road transfer," say Scott Dunn - but once you're there, the nigh-on unlimited delights of the Amazon are at your doorstep. Go piranha fishing, birdwatching, pink river dolphin or caiman spotting. canoeing, or simply explore the flora and fauna around you (or, alternatively, just relax at the Lodge's bar, and claim you did all of the above). Four nights full board and activities at the jungle lodge followed by 3 days B&B in Rio, from £2,815 per person

#### 094

scottdunn com

# THE VIEW FROM THE TOP OF PARADISE

Bloukrans Bungy Bloukrans Bridge, Western Cape, South Africa +27 42 281 1458

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The highest commercial bungy jump in the world is on Africa's highest bridge, overlooking the Bloukrans River Valley on the Western Cape of South Africa. At 216 metres, the Face Adrenalin bungy experience combines the truly heart-racing (pulsing techno music, whooping and cheering staff, the jump itself) with the extraordinarily tranquil (the experience of hanging,





silently, and looking down over miles of untouched rainforest). An experience worth the cost of the flights, all on its own. From £50,

faceadrenalin.com

#### 095

#### THE PRIVATEST ISLAND

#### Calivigny Island Grenada

+1 473 405 3278

In 2000, The Cohens, a French family not shy of a few bob. bought this enormous island off the south coast of Grenada and spent more than £100m on developing it. Spread over 80 beautiful acres and boasting six beaches with stunning views of both the Atlantic and Caribbean oceans, it's recently become available to hire. The island accommodates 50, but if you just want the main house that sleeps 20, it'll set you back £300,000 per week. Your own private resort then boasts a fleet of gleaming boats. private chefs and a plethora of water sports, with windsurfing, wake boarding, snorkeling and fishing all included. There's also Italian, French and Grenadian menus each night and six sandy beaches - one for each day of your stay? They'll even arrange a fully bespoke bonfire and fireworks display to cap off your trip, too. calivigny-island.com

#### 096

# THE SEVEN-STAR EXPERIENCE

Burj Al Arab Jumeirah Beach Road, Dubai

+971 4 301 7777

The self-proclaimed "most luxurious hotel in the world" (and according to its manager, also the world's "most iconic") would sneer at even the more lavish venues featured in this guide. This preposterously opulent, sail-shaped hotel opened on

an island of reclaimed land in 1999 at a cost of \$650m. Though not to everyone's tastes, the Burj Al Arab is unquestionably indulgent guests arrive via either white Rolls-Royce Phantom or helicopter, before taking a private lift up to their suite (it's suites-only: there's nothing so pedestrian as a "room" here) where they are attended to by a "host of butlers" at all times (there is a staff-to-suite ratio of 8:1). If one tires of the extensive private-dining options there are seven world-class restaurants to choose from including Al Mahara which features an enormous central aguarium and is accessed via a simulated submarine iourney. An unreal experience. in every sense of the word. From £1,628 per night jumeirah.com

#### 097

#### **THE BUNGA BUNGALOWS**

Ponta dos Ganchos Resort Rua Eupidio Alves do, Nascimento, 104, Governador Celso Ramos, Santa Catarina 88190-000 Brazil

Escapist retreat in a secluded tropical peninsula, surrounded by rainforest and glittering sea. The Ponta dos Ganchos is a collection of 25 free-standing bungalows, each of which boasts its own Jacuzzi or infinity pool (and, in the case of the Special Emerald Villa bungalow, its own wine cellar and underground gym). Go whale watching, enjoy the local waterfalls or hop in a boat and sail out to the oyster farm. When it comes to dining. try the seafood, freshly caught and then barbecued for you on the beach - though gastronomes should book ahead for dinner on the private island (which seats only two). Almost the dictionary definition of "ideal honeymoon location". pontadosganchos.com

#### **PARADISE ON WHEELS**

# FOUR STUNNING LAID-BACK TRAIN JOURNEYS

#### 098

#### **SOUTH AFRICA**

The Blue Train (via The Luxury Train Club) +44 12 4989 0205

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Follow the lead of kings and presidents by boarding The Blue Train, which travels from Cape Town to Pretoria (or vice versa) over the course of a leisurely 27-hour journey. The spacious suites feature writing desks, twin or double beds with goose-down pillows, and - crucially - en-suite bathrooms, all of which feature marble floors and basins, some of which feature actual baths. Elsewhere, the Dining Car offers South African fare including ovsters. Karoo lamb and snoek fish (formal dress for dinner is mandatory), while the Conference Car is equipped with full business facilities for the many, many meetings one inevitably finds oneself conducting during a two-day luxury train journey. £890 for a luxury double suite in low season luxurvtrainclub.com

#### 099

#### INDIA

The Golden Chariot +44 80 0032 7748

Over the course of eight days and seven nights, a ride on the aptly-named Golden Chariot showcases the beauty of Karnataka, south-west India. The journey, from Bangalore to Goa (and then back to Bangalore), takes national parks, temples, lush forests and the famous ruins of Hampi along the banks of the Tungabhadra River. Service, as you'd expect, is of the highest standard, and the train features air-conditioned suites. a choice of two restaurants and, astonishingly, a spa and gym. £2,510pp, double occupancy, thegoldenchariot.co.in

#### 100 -

#### **EUROPE**

Venice Simplon-Orient-Express +44 84 5 077 2222

A gleaming throwback to a bygone age, the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express (VSOE) travels throughout Europe and should be experienced by every committed traveller at least once in their lifetime. Board the British Pullman and Northen Belle day trains around the United Kingdom, or the Royal Scotsman luxury train for a journey into the Scottish Highlands. Father afield, Orient Express routes traverse Venice, Vienna, Prague and Paris. Make sure you visit the Bar Car for a drink and, when packing, remember that it's impossible to be overdressed. From £690per person belmond.com/venice-simplonorient-express

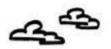
#### 101

#### RUSSIA, MONGOLIA AND CHINA

Trans-Siberian Railway +44 84 5521 2910

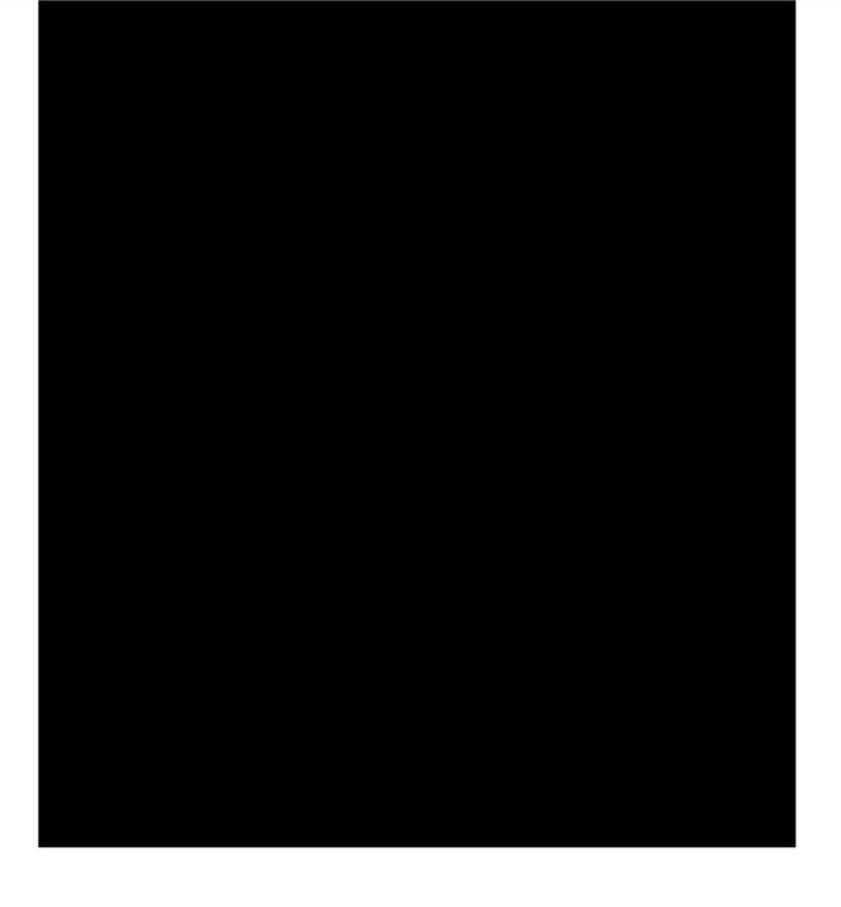
The world's longest railway journey affords the opportunity to travel in some considerable style, through a variety of stunning locations. A long-time favourite of eminent Russians -Tsar Nicholas II once presented his wife Alexandra with a Fabergé egg, which had a route map engraved in silver and marked out with semiprecious stones (nowadays. disappointingly, they give out paper maps). For those wishing to experience the Trans-Siberian Railway, the Classic trip is a safe bet - it travels from St Petersburg to Beijing (stopping off at Lake Baikal and Mongolia) over the course of 18 days, via museums, hotels, trekking opportunities, with the option of extending for a 19th day in a Siberian village. From £1.825 trans-siberian.co.uk













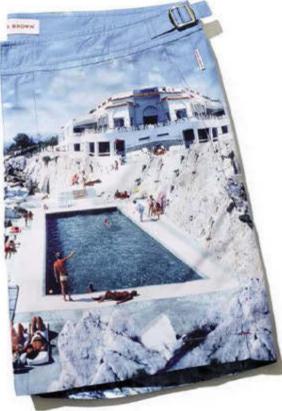
# **SPLASHING OUT**

**By Luke Leitch** 

#### The luxury swim shorts boom

SWIM SHORTS, £225 EACH, FROM THE OB EDITIONS COLLECTION





#### Photographs by Chris Leah

Iton Towers recently took the step of banning Speedos. In France, there's the opposite concern: step into a lido, water park or public piscine in anything other than small, tight trunks and they're liable to alert the authorities. A law dating back to 1903 bans swim shorts on hygiene grounds: whereas swim briefs may *only* be used for swimming, goes the thinking, Bermudas and other styles of shorts worn outside the pool are more likely to get dirty and contaminate the water. There are genuine reports of noncompliant foreigners being fished out by lifeguards, baggies first.

Men's swimwear is a tricky thing. On the one hand, the market has been characterised by nine-inch board shorts and graphics targeting teenagers, on the other are the dreaded budgie smugglers. Even if swimming happens to be your job, the style authorities haven't always been helpful: Stella McCartney joked that the hardest part of designing the Team GB kit for the 2012 Olympics were the trunks – there was nowhere to put the logo. When brands have targeted customers who aren't sixth formers or athletes, they tended to have a specific demographic in mind: the surfer on Bondi Beach, the gay man in

Mykonos or the old boy sailing round Capri. There was little going for the regular guy who just wanted to feel comfortable (or at least, not too uncomfortable) by the pool: the style-literate demographic who had the rest of their wardrobe sorted, but who'd never paid their swimmers much heed. But the last few years have seen a new wave of brands rising to fill this gap: luxury men's swimwear is now a booming market. These days there are labels who recognise men's swimming trunks as a broader lifestyle proposition, one that can be produced and promoted like any other designer product. Indeed, the evolution of the market has been compared to that of denim, 15 or 20 years ago. Brands like Orlebar Brown, whose tailored trunks are not so much swim shorts but "shorts you can swim in", Frescobol Carioca, a label set up by two British stockbrokers inspired by Brazilian beach culture, and Dan Ward, "swimwear designed with an urban edge and flow effortlessly from beach to deck or to elegant summer cocktail", established in 2012 by a former design and merchandising boss for Dunhill and Hermès. There already existed the luxury Saint-Tropez brand Vilebrequin, whose flamboyant printed shorts have been kitting





for lunch. So that was the key first observation, the key moment I realised that when men went from pool to bar they were either looking incongruously scruffy, or were having to go off and get changed."

Brown had no fashion or retail background, so he started from scratch. A course at Central St Martins helped him "learn how to draw" and was followed by a three-day Start Your Own Business session at London's Portobello Business Centre. He partnered with an old college friend, Julia Simpson-Orelebar (who left the business amicably in 2008), and using a storage unit in Fulham, they began selling their shorts in four styles. Brown used savings, bank loans and remortgaged his flat. For the first two years he did everything himself: from ironing the shorts to standing in queues in post offices doing the customer returns. He says he was confident he had a product that was unique and would sell. Indeed, much like "winter sunglasses" before them, he had effectively invented a category no one knew they needed until they knew they needed it. And once you cross that line, it's difficult to go back. (Brown says a significant percentage of shoppers are repeat customers buying the same shorts in different colour ways, or to gift to friends.) Today his styles include Bulldog, Springer and Dane II (Brown owns dogs) with prices ranging from £125 to £245. "Twohundred-and-fifty pounds is a lot of wedge," he concedes.

The brand has been saturated in summer azure from the start. Bathe in the balmy glow of orlebarbrown.co.uk, and spotting what seduces so many men to spend so much actually proves reasonably straightforward. The most expensive come in a series called Editions, a name which pretty easily communicates the fact that the number of each design is strictly limited — hence the exclusivity. Each set of Editions is uniquely decorated. Most are printed with photographs, while some come embroidered with figurative line drawings — variously tattoo whorls (a bit Maharishi-esque) and cityscapes. The photographs are by far the best: in these swimmers, you'd be wearing your dream holiday even if you're not yet living it.

Contemporary Australian photographer Jon Frank — an unironic Down Under Martin Parr — has provided a dreamily soft-focus sea and skyscape whose horizon bisects the shorts at the crucial equator of waistband and hem. (Orlebar Brown is big on collaborations. Other limited runs have seen it pair with Bill Amberg, Eley Kishimoto and Alan Aldridge.) Others are digitally imprinted with vintage images found by someone with an excellent eye from the depths of the Hulton/Getty archive. These seductive vistas include an aerial view of a Riviera marina taken from so high that the yachts seem like a finely drafted pattern,

via a school of surfers dropping in on the same endless Oahu wave, to a mid-century waterskiing vista shot from a boat off La Croisette. Somehow every cropped element of the image is stitched in perfect fit with its neighbour to ensure the wearer has a flawless, 360-degree panorama of each still-life paradise around his unmentionables.

This is the OB USP. You could easily forgo some Editions shorts and get yourself down to John Lewis where they'll sell you a pair of Speedos for £20. But, hey. They might be swimwear's equivalent of the £5 pint or the £1m studio flat — items that breach a hitherto unimaginable price threshold — but these are shorts so beguiling and so beautiful that it barely seems to matter. At my screen, staring deep into a Slim Aarons-shot pair of OB's whose mise en scène features a couple chilling on a palm-fringed beach alongside a glorious scarlet Morgan, jet-set fantasies stir.

•••

Jet-set fantasies don't necessarily involve an early-morning EasyJet flight to a factory in Portugal, but nevertheless that is where I'm heading. This morning, I find myself outside Petratex, the factory where Orlebar Brown's swim shorts are made. I'm here with Brown and some of his chief OB lieutenants — production manager Alyona Bounetska and production assistant Francesca Pink — to observe the development of those photo-print designs as they proceed down the production line. Petratex specialises in producing high-spec ready-to-wear for both men and women.

Over the next few hours, I see garments that were mid-production for what looks like an impressive portfolio of Spring/Summer 2015 clients – that foliage print must be Marni; the raised, ridged neoprene looks like Alexander Wang's Balenciaga and that plisse, surely, is Chloé. Supplementing these titans of womenswear is the high-performance sportswear: I spot Rapha jackets and unmissable – thanks to a hoarding downstairs – is the revelation that Petratex co-developed and manufactured the Speedo LZR full-body swimsuit in which Michael Phelps won so many golds at the Beijing Olympics. (It was later banned for being an unfair advantage.) I've languished in many a fashion manufacturing facility in my time, and of all of them, only two top-tier in-house Italian factories – MaxMara and Canali – matched this Portuguese upstart for tech-heavy R&D. Over a canteen lunch, Petratex's profoundly caffeinated CEO, Sergio Neto, explains that once he realised some years ago that the company's less-exacting

# TRUNK ARCHIVE: other designer swimwear



£155, BY DAN WARD



£270, BY LORO PIANA



£145, BY FRESCOBOL CARIOCA

clients would inevitably decamp en masse for low-cost Asian manufacturing, his best option was to carve out a niche at the very top of the market. "Now," he says during one of his regular 20 espressos a day, "we are expanding."

Which is where Orlebar Brown comes in. Until a few years ago, Adam Brown's swimwear — which back then, pre-Editions, were all plain or pattern-print polyamide — were rustled up in a small factory in North London. But as the OB formula took shape and the brand's reputation grew, demand outstripped the supply that London could offer. Bounetska (whose mother runs the London factory), was established as the conduit contact between Orlebar Brown's headquarters in London and Petratex just outside Porto. Today, Bounetska and Neto ensure that every pair of Orlebar Brown swim-shorts pass through a minimum 12-stage manufacture process. Italian zippers on the fly and the back pocket are applied by hand, although the pocket itself and darts are machine applied.

The wide, tailored waistband that is such a key OB feature (neither elastic nor drawstring will ever unattractively cut into the waistline of any OB man) is made of between four and six pieces of material, to ensure it rests just so. Also hand fitted are those side adjusters, made in Italy from a metal compound whose shininess will resist tarnishing by both chlorine or salt, and which allow for the most delicate adjustment as the wearer's silhouette ebbs and flows. As we admire a Willy Wonka-esque hydraulic logistics system, I spot an enormous large sack of those side adjusters waiting for their turn to be fitted on the production line. Neto reckons Petratex has nearly 50,000 side fasteners in stock, "and we will need many more than that this year". Ergo, Petratex is making a great many of these highend swim shorts.

Producing exclusive, photo-print Editions shorts is the most labour-intensive brief on Neto's books. In part, their premium price is due to the fact that every pair is made of two layers of material. The



images are printed on a thin outer layer then heat bonded onto a nylon inner. Brown is frustrated that as yet he has not found a fabric, like the beloved French-sourced polyamide used in his first generation shorts, that are quick drying but retain an almost organic, cotton feel, and which can take a print directly. "When we do, though," he says, "it will be perfect."

The further price-spiking aspect of OB Editions – licencing costs notwithstanding – is that for every different size of short, each photograph must be individually templated to ensure that key 360-degree panorama is unblemished from seam to seam. So, say, if one Editions design features 200 pairs of shorts in ten sizes, every panel that makes up every run of 20 needs to be separately scanned and cut before sewing. The Petratex technician responsible for this is hunched over his Apple, mouse in hand, deliberating the finer points of an image showing a sea of sun umbrellas. Does it take a long time to make each image fit each size of each short? "A long time?" he repeats. "You could say that, yes."

As for Brown, at first he seems startled to see that a large, exclusively OB office has been set up since his last visit here. Inside it, working solely on his company's orders and production flow, are eight Portuguese staff members he has never met before: like Pink, like Bounetska, and like the 100 Orlebar Browners who now number his staff in London, here are still more people whose livelihood is OB-based. Brown suddenly appears nervous to meet them. He is very English – but proud.

• • •

And yet, Brown might be just a smidgen nonplussed by all this swim short emphasis. Since 2012, Orlebar Brown has reshaped his company to no longer live exclusively by the pool, beach, or promenade. Back then, his non-swim offering comprised a few shirts, some bought-in shoes and a cut of chinos so flattering – they're called Griffon – they deserve an article of their own. Today, Brown's company has evolved from water-based minnow-with-prospects to bona-fide trans-seasonal contender. They now produce a great deal of clothing - more than 300 pieces – of an impressive scope and quality: piqué-cotton polo shirts, own-brand shoes, Harringtons, cashmere and lambswool knits, sunglasses, even jersey-necked down gilets. According to Brown, more than half of his sales are now non-swimwear. At Selfridges, Terry Betts estimates that broadening its selection has helped Orlebar Brown increase sales by 50 per cent between 2013 and 2014. Either way, this burgeoning empire was built on swim shorts. And until the brainwave that began Orlebar Brown hit him, nothing especially much suggested that here, in Adam Brown, was the stuff of a menswear tycoon-in-

THIS PAGE: THE DISTINCTIVE ENGRAVED METAL SIDE FASTENERS FOUND ON ALL ORLEBAR BROWN SHORTS. OPPOSITE PAGE: A WORKER APPLIES THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO A PAIR OF PHOTO-PRINT EDITIONS



£160, BY VILEBREQUIN



£155, BY ROBINSON LES BAINS



£275, BY THADDEUS O'NEIL



£150, BY MYO

waiting. Apart, maybe, from an inordinate fondness of clothes: "I love shopping, and have always loved fabric. I've spent way too much on clothes in the past." His was a career that had eddied from fundraiser to another love, photographing society girls, children and, of course, dogs. "I became a rather bad portrait photographer — I was rubbish!"

In London, Brown went hunting for swimwear smart enough to bear that transition: instead he found his own. "I went up and down Bond Street, and to the department stores. And the main thing that struck me was that while Ralph Lauren and Prada and almost every designer brand had swim as part of its collection, it was always an aside, an afterthought, never the focus. And yes, there were brands like Vilebrequin, Sundek, O'Neill, Mambo, Hot Tuna... but they all had either a very strong surf element or a very strong Riviera element."

Brown had a glimmer, he sensed, of two gaps in the market. In swimwear, nobody made shorts that were seemly, smart, fitted and sleek. "And from the ready-to-wear side, the fashion side, nobody had ever thought to look at swim and think, 'What is the life that goes on around that?"

The Orlebar Brown website went online in March 2007, offering four lengths of Brown's design in five colours. But the company's first sale happened five months earlier in a branch of Starbucks on Kensington High Street: "I'd had the shorts made up, and they were sitting in a storage unit. I met with friend of mine from Oxford Polytechnic. She bought a pair of Dane [OB's longest short, with a 26cm inseam] in sky blue, size 36, as a Christmas present for her husband. I don't know if he still has them, but the receipt is framed in my office. They were made in London, in Alyona's mother's factory."

A month later, Brown reports: "I was in Soho House Miami sitting around the pool on a Sunday afternoon, and I looked around and counted 18 pieces of Orlebar. That gave me a huge kick. And what I loved was that it wasn't just shorts and T-shirts."

Fashion, though, is ruthlessly self-referencing: and thus the company that discovers that men are willing to shell out for even the most basic of necessities, provided the quality is there, have found themselves flattered by imitators. There was Marcello Conti, which three years ago produced a louche but lovely collection of goldzippered, mother-of-pearl-buttoned, print swim shorts, made in China, which now seems to have faded away. And in 2012, Dan Ward founded his eponymous luxury swim brand that charges up to £175 on Mr Porter for its mid-length shorts. Perhaps most akin of all to the OB model is Frescobol Carioca, which began as a Brazilian wooden bat-and-ball beach-game project run by two schoolmates turned City financiers. They recruited Oliver Benjamin – a gifted tailor and clothier whose shop at London's Ludgate Circus, near Fleet Street, is well worth hunting down – to make an FC short whose waist-adjusters are buttoned instead of buckled, and which, when plain or patterned (in prints lifted from the mosaic pavements of famous Brazilian beach promenades), sell for £145. With only eight staff members, Frescobol Carioca has established a wholesale network of 300 retailers around

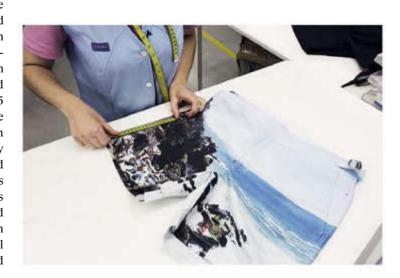
the world and opened two stores of its own, both in London. Its products are extremely fine.

"Adam was the pioneer of the tailored trunk, and it's great what he did — it has opened people's eyes to tailored swimwear," says Max Leese, one of FC's founders. "We come at it from a different angle, though. Our customers love the uniqueness of our prints, particularly their origin, coming from the sidewalks seen along the Rio beaches, Copacabana and Ipanema. Everyone loves Brazil and wants a piece of it."

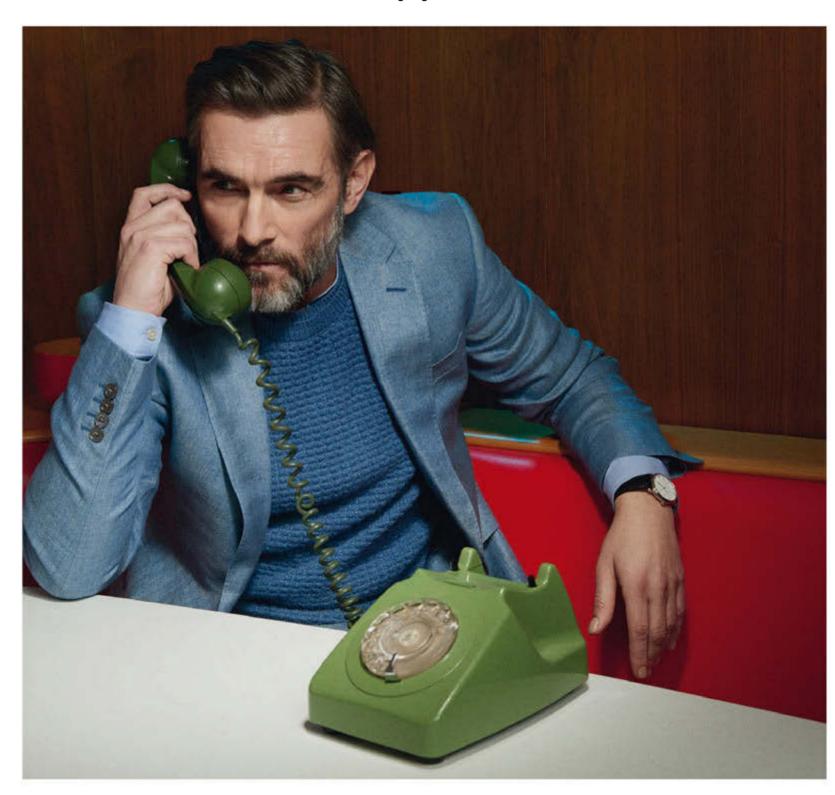
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Back in the Petratex quality control lab, as our group discusses the finer points of Neto's online garment-tracking and review system, I watch Brown drift to a rail of samples and flick idly through. The label on one pale linen shirt makes him throw up his hands in mock horror. That label says Frescobol; Neto looks fleetingly sheepish, but not very. Despite the competition, Orlebar Brown's position seems established, its future sunny. When I hypothesise that some heavy-investing superfund might at some point step in to snap it up, Brown doesn't recoil at the idea of being left to devote more time to his husband and his dogs — and to muse poolside in search of the next big idea.

On the plane out, mid-croissant, he had run through a draft of the speech he had planned for the next office party. He gave me a taster: "I think we've grown from being a toddler and we are now reaching adolescence: ultimately we are progressing in life. We are definitely at that stage now where everything is growing very fast. So we are thinking about retail concept, about planning — are there gaps in the range, unit costs, different territories, supply base issues? All those things become increasingly important." After a chew, he added: "Whereas at the beginning, all you want to do is get a product made and sell it. At the beginning you are just grateful to be alive." ENDS orlebarbrown.co.uk



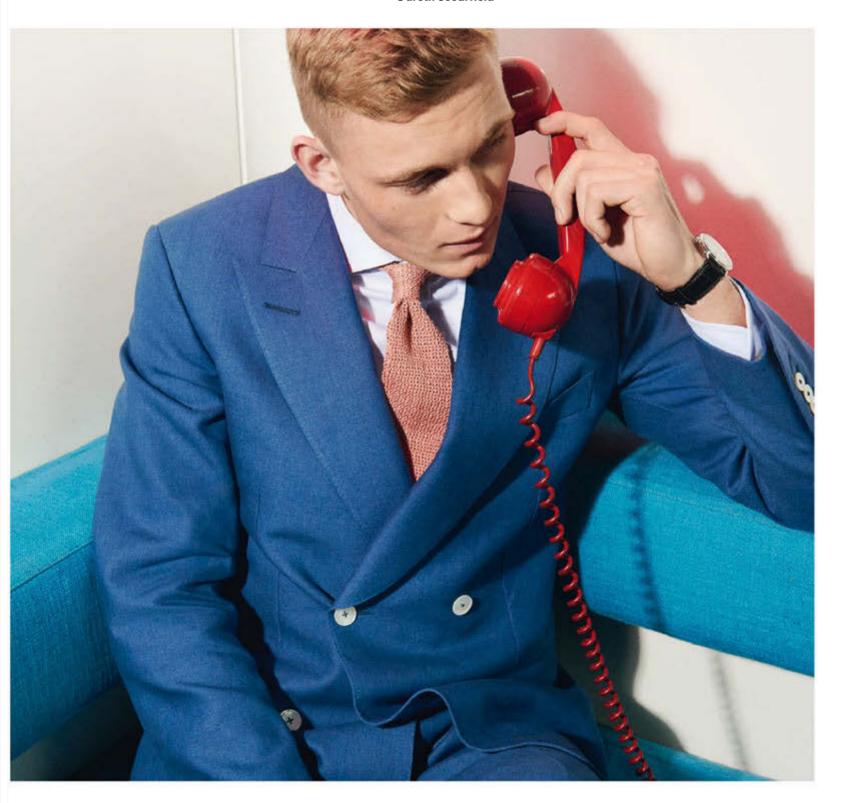
Photographs by Kourtney Roy



# **MEMORYHOUSE**

The other person has cleared

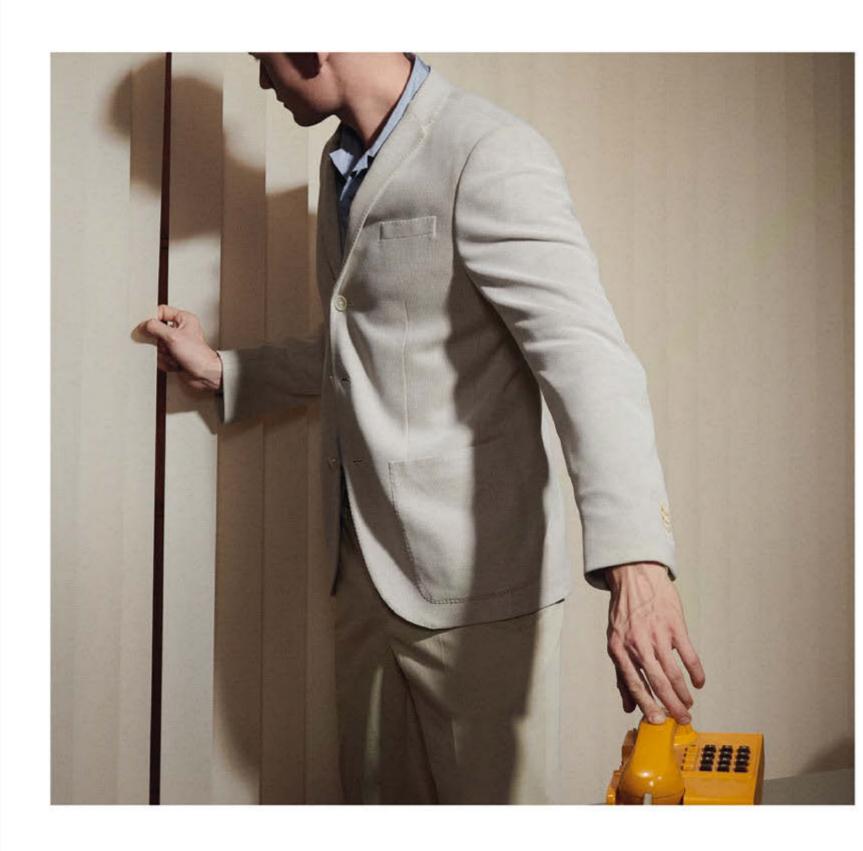
#### Fashion by Gareth Scourfield



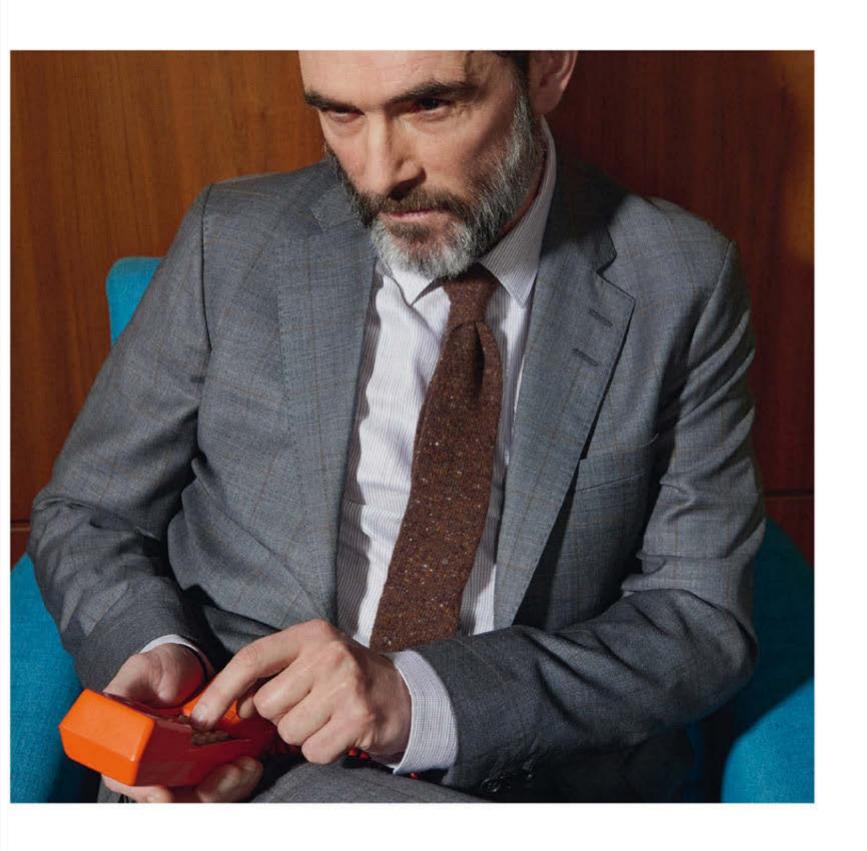
Left
Light blue wool/linen jacket, £595; blue wool jumper, £495;
light blue cotton shirt, £125, all by Gieves & Hawkes.

light blue cotton shirt, £125, all by Gieves & Hawkes. Stainless steel ultra-slim Villeret watch on black alligator leather strap, £5,520, by Blancpain

Above
Blue linen double-breasted suit, £1,425;
cream cotton shirt, £330; pink silk
knitted tie, £95, all by Alfred Dunhill.
Watch, as before



Cream cotton suit, £1,050, grey cotton shirt, £160, both by Corneliani



Grey wool suit, £600; pale grey cotton shirt, £130, both by Tiger of Sweden. Brown wool woven tie, £95, by Gieves & Hawkes

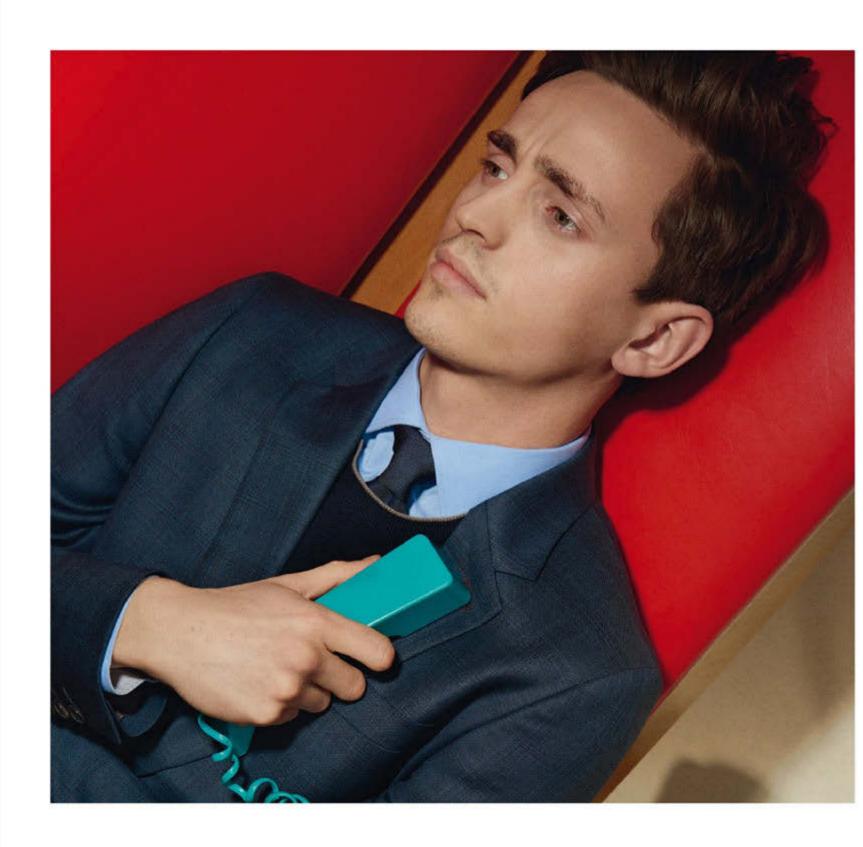


Beige wool suit, £825; white linen shirt, £175; olive green tie, £85, all by Richard James. Brown leather brogues, £500, by Crockett & Jones. Grey cotton socks, £15, by Falke









Navy wool suit, £900; navy wool jumper with brown detail, £150; light blue cotton shirt, £130; navy silk tie, £80, all by Paul Smith

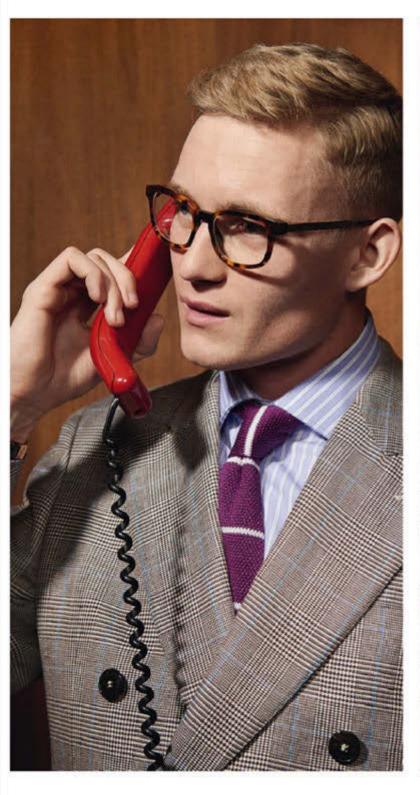


Blue cotton/silk suit, £450; white cotton shirt with cufflinks, £150; blue wool knitted tie, £75; black leather briefcase, £430, all by Boss





Navy printed wool jacket, £1,750; white/blue striped cotton shirt, £380; navy/white printed silk tie, £125, all by Dior Homme





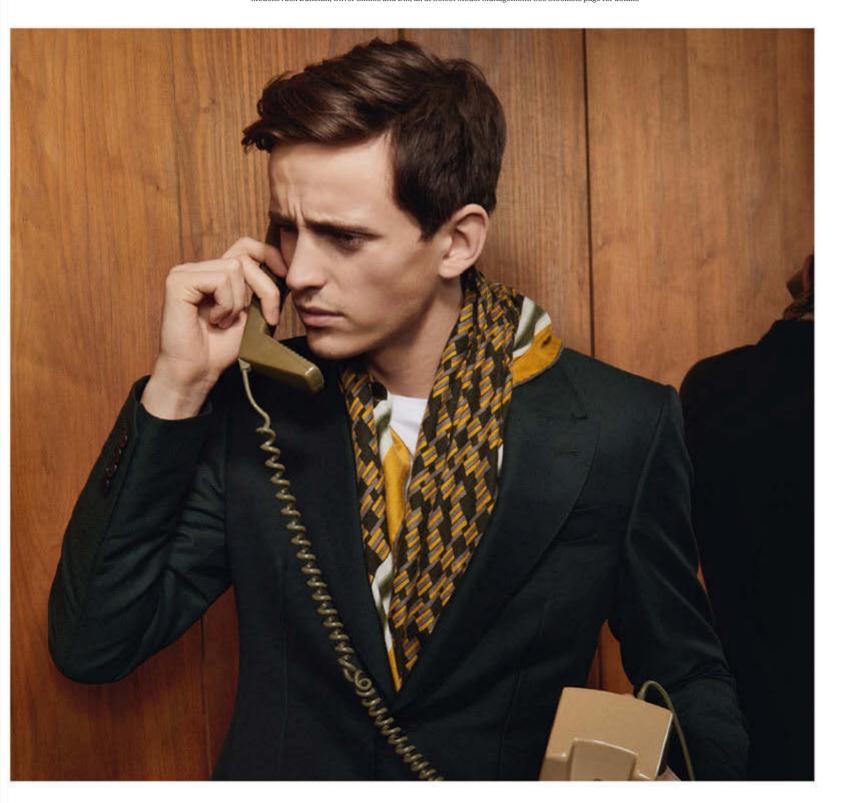
Grey wool Prince of Wales check suit, £700; blue/white pinstripe cotton shirt, £95; purple/white silk knitted tie, £100, all by Hackett.

Tortoiseshell acetate/metal glasses, £250, by Harry Lary's



Grey wool/silk suit, £2,295; pale blue cotton shirt, £195; navy/cream silk knitted tie, £135, all by Kilgour

Photographer's assistants: Frédéric Congiu, Jim Agnew. Fashion assistant: Jonathan Dann  $Grooming/hair: A miee \ Hershan \ at \ Stella \ Creative \ Artists \ using \ Chanel \ S \ 2015, Chanel \ Body \ Excellence \ and \ Bumble \ \& \ Bumble$ Models: Alex Dunstan, Oliver Smiles and Dill, all at Select Model Management. See Stockists page for details



Green cotton/wool suit jacket, £1,960; white cotton T-shirt, £270; yellow/green patterned linen scarf, £540, all by Berluti

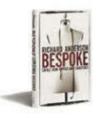












TODAY THERE ARE NO GENTLEMEN BY NIK COHN (1971)

DRESSING THE MAN BY ALAN FLUSSER (2003)

MEN IN BLACK
BY JOHN HARVEY
(1995)

A HISTORY OF MEN'S FASHION BY FARID CHENOUNE (1993)

AMERICAN PSYCHO
BY BRET EASTON ELLIS
(1991)

BESPOKE: SAVILE ROW RIPPED & SMOOTHED BY RICHARD ANDERSON (2009)

# A MENSWEAR READER

By John-Michael O'Sullivan

# Where have all the great clothes books gone?

Beau Brummell destroyed his books. Or at least, the ones he'd kept when he fled to France at the height of his fame. His debtors seized his London library, a collection excitably billed by Christie's as "The Genuine Property of a Man of Fashion... Books, Chiefly of French, Italian and English Literature, the best Editions, and in fine condition". The few volumes that survived into his long, painful exile were ripped to shreds; aghast visitors told of a destitute, scruffy man maddened by syphilis, using the pages to wrap his beard clippings. But the demise of the man who once cared so much about every detail didn't matter, in the end; the man he'd once been had already become myth, thanks to Honoré de Balzac's 1830 Treatise d'Elegance (Treatise on Elegant Living).

In a previous age, a gentleman's library was one of the things that made him a man of fashion. Indeed, the narrator of *Memoirs and Adventures of a Man of Fashion* (1835), by Charles Harper and John Williams, admired a friend's carefully-chosen library as much as he did his well-stocked wine cellar. Balzac's *Treatise d'Elegance* kick-started a flurry of

Victorian examinations of masculine life and style, having elevated Brummel from London legend to international style icon.

Today, it seems the interest has faded. Visit any bookshop and you'll find the fashion section teeming with coffee-table blockbusters and lavish biographies, personal memoirs and academic tomes all about womenswear. Occasionally, somewhere around ankle level, you will find a cluster of dated menswear titles, their covers running the gamut of self-effacing discretion from navy to flannel grey. They nearly always follow a tried-and-tested path, with Brummell himself as the starting point: Chapter 1, Page 1 – The Dandy. From there we get the Duke of Windsor to the Teddy boys and mods; then on to James Dean and Steve McQueen, with detours for the Swinging Sixties and good-for-a-laugh Seventies.

"The thing with menswear publications," sighs Paul Lawrence of London's vintage specialist November Books, "is they mostly all say the same thing whether pictorial histories or rulebooks. It's always the same icons, the same stereotypes."

Patrick Grant, creative director of tailors E Tautz, agrees. "I think there are lots of good books about clothes, about how to dress, what shoes to wear with what suit and so on, but that might just be the problem. An obsession with the rules of dress masks what's truly interesting."

What interests Grant is the character within the clothing. For him, it's less about rules and more about the people abiding by them or, indeed, breaking them. He's made a convincing case by publishing his own book, *Original Man* (2014), featuring an off-piste cast of icons ranging from Federico Fellini to Ernest Shackleton. In doing so, Grant is mirroring a tailorturned-author progression perhaps most famously tested by Hardy Amies in 1964, when he published *ABC of Men's Fashion*.

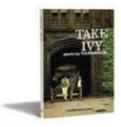
Though Amies' slim guide remains as elegantly put-together as its author, those letters, A, B, C, too often cover everything that's wrong with menswear writing. Books have a tendency to be simplistic, with moody photography and elegant aphorisms. But there are rare exceptions, particularly when you realise, as Paul Lawrence points out, that most great fashion books aren't about fashion at all. Think of F Scott Fitzgerald's Jay Gatsby, the nowhere boy dressed in emperor's new-world clothes. Or Gatsby's demon descendant, Patrick Bateman, his brain crawling with Eighties labels in American Psycho (1991). Or the unnamed hero of Colin MacInnes' Absolute Beginners (1959), a photographer rejoicing in his threads; "grey pointed alligator casuals, the pink neon pair of ankle crepe nylon-stretch, my Cambridge blue glove-cut



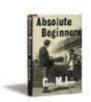




THE WAY WE WORE: A LIFE IN THREADS BY ROBERT ELMS [2005]



TAKE IVY
BY TERUYOSHI
HAYASHIDA
(1965)



ABSOLUTE
BEGINNERS
BY COLIN MACINNES
[1959]



THE GREAT GATSBY
BY F SCOTT
FITZGERALD
(1925)



ABC OF MEN'S FASHION BY HARDY AMIES (1964)

jeans, a vertical-striped happy shirt revealing my lucky neck-charm on its chain, and the Roman-cut short-arse jacket".

MacInnes' fetishistically precise fiction meets its real-world mirror in Robert Elms' 2005 memoir of clothes and coming of age, *The Way We Wore: A Life in Threads*. "I'd intended to write a more objective history of British youth culture fashion," he explains, "then I realised it was a more interesting book as a memoir because I had worn all those outfits, been a member of all those wonderful trouser tribes."

The narrative, littered with flares, Wayfarers and Ben Shermans, is intensely specific. But as a tale of desire and disappointment, acquisition and obsession, it struck a chord with a broad readership. "The response, from gentlemen of a certain age, has been touching," Elms says. "Paul Weller sent me a letter saying it was the story of his life."

Why, if menswear means so much to so many, aren't there more great books on men and clothing? Elms shrugs: "There's a bizarre assumption that we don't care, that men aren't interested."

It's this "caring", being seen to have thought too much about one's appearance, that lays at the root of the male concern about fashion. Beau Brummell cared. So did Gatsby and Bateman, though both were sent up by their authors for favouring appearance over character. In fact, it's a common literary trope. Look at Peter Templer in Anthony Powell's 12-book *A Dance to the Music of Time* series, introduced with the words, "You get more like an advertisement for gents' tailoring every day."

What is clear, though, is that men care about style regardless of ridicule, and that they read about it, too. Indeed, it only takes a little persuasion to get people to reveal what their favourite books on the subject are. Novelist Simon van Boov suggests Brideshead Revisited (1945) by Evelyn Waugh and Three Men in a Boat (1889) by Jerome K Jerome. Patrick Grant recommends the resource book Vintage Menswear (2012). Many of the best, though, are out-of-print rarities: Paul Lawrence plumps for German photographer Roswitha Hecke's Mann für Mann (1989), a simple, powerful document on men of all ages and backgrounds from around the world.

Unsurprisingly, the paucity of literature on this subject makes the few exceptions really stand out. English academic John Harvey's cleverly disturbing *Men in Black* (1995), with its pointed reflections on the links between black clothing, rebellion and repression, springs to mind. *Take Ivy*, the now seminal book on US preppy style, first published in 1965, is still hugely influential. So is Farid Chenoune's *A History of Men's Fashion* (1993), an elegantly written journey through familiar territory, made fascinating by the author's Parisian vantage point.

If you're looking for one book, though, make it Nik Cohn's *Today There Are No Gentlemen*. Written in 1971, it's a blend of documentary history, social commentary and cultural criticism; a book that asks "does it matter?" before the end of the first page, and then spends the rest of the volume explaining why it does.

If nothing else, it will introduce you to British fashion historian and author James Laver's patriarchal principle; the maxim that, until the mid-20th century, men actively chose to model themselves on their fathers: and that then, spectacularly, they didn't. It also captures, as no other book I've read has, the when, who and, crucially, the why behind the story of modern menswear. Everything from the dullness of pre-war clothing, "nobody cared, and nobody tried", to the fierce, ration-era resentment that exploded into mod versus Teddy boy violence. It's also full of wonderfully cut writing: "Too well dressed, that catches it exactly. One must be correct, ves, but the correctness must be instinctive. inbred. One must not try, because effort was common. In fact, one must go to the other extreme, make efforts to be antieffort. If one bought a new suit it must not look new: if its creases hung sharp as a knife, one must scruff them up a bit, or else be thought a parvenu: 'Very spruce,' said The Times of Rex Harrison, and meant it as a put-down."

Cohn's journey ends in Manchester, where he goes to measure London's menswear hype against the North's reality. There, he meets a young chemist, the proud owner of seven Burton suits. "When I buy a new suit," he tells Cohn on the book's last page, "it's almost like getting a promotion." It's a short line, retold with minimal fuss. But I can't think of a more honest, more eloquent statement about the fundamental power of men's clothing, and the absurdity of not writing about it. It makes you wish that Cohn, or someone like him, would tackle the subject of men and clothes today. Because we're worth it, aren't we? ENDS



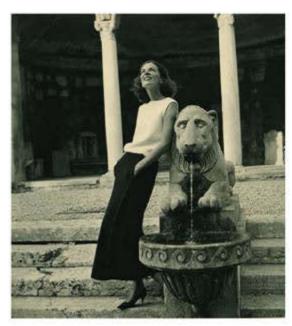
NEWLY UNEARTHED IMAGES FROM THE ARCHIVE OF ANNE "THEO" GRAHAM, SHOWING THE MODEL AT WORK AND AT PLAY WITH PHOTOGRAPHERS JOE LEOMBRUNO AND JACK BUDI IN ROME DURING THE CITY'S GOLDEN ERA OF STYLE





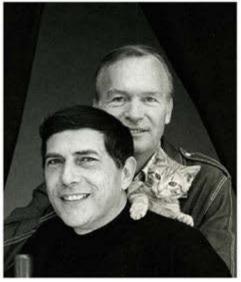












ABOVE: JACK BODI (RIGHT) AND JOE LEOMBRUNO LEFT: THEIR MUSE, THEO

# THINGS TO REMEMBER

By John-Michael O'Sullivan

How one American model and two photographers conquered Fifties Rome





FROM LEFT: ROME'S VIA VENETO, 1955; JAYNE MANSFIELD ACCEPTS A LIFT, 1962; RAQUEL WELCH WITH MARCELLO MASTROIANNI, 1966

# 66 IN ROME, there is only

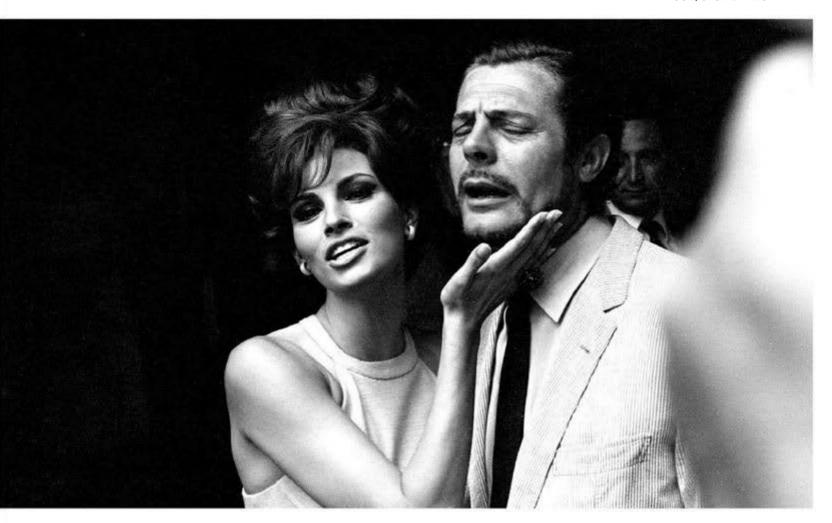
one street where people make a social practice of sitting on the sidewalk. That is Via Veneto. It seems, at times, to be given over almost entirely to Americans and streetwalkers and boys picking up discarded cigarette butts. But it's a beautiful street. It winds like an old river among the great hotels and the American Embassy and the fashionable places for Americans to sit in the sun."

- Tennessee Williams, 1950

Enrico Carlo Saraceni lives in one of Rome's most elegant districts, in the same apartment he lived in as a small boy. Then, he shared the apartment with Carlo, his film-producer father, and Ann Theophane Graham ("Theo"), his beautiful American mother. And upstairs, in the terrace-wrapped, painting-filled *superattico*, lived two other Americans, Joe and Jack, more-or-less official uncles and unofficial second fathers. Theo, Jack and Joe had been best friends long before Enrico Carlo was born, their trinity forged in Manhattan's post-war boom. There, all three had been part of the fashion elite: Theo Graham as one of the industry's top models and Jack Bodi and Joe Leombruno as fashion photographers, with Jack sometimes turning his hand to styling. They came to Italy during the country's midcentury golden years — as so many other Americans did — and stayed.

And now all three are dead. Joe, the last survivor, died in a Palm Beach hospital four years ago. And neither he nor Jack left much behind to fill in the blanks in their pasts. Theo, by contrast, kept things — boxes and suitcases filled with photographs — which her son inherited after her death. Enrico Carlo had always known that his mother had been a model and that Jack and Joe had been photographers: he'd heard stories about their carefree, glamorous youth. And he remembered moments when their fashionable world intersected with his own: growing up with Audrey Hepburn's son and being taken to visit Gore Vidal's Ravello retreat. Over the years, he often spoke about Theo's pictures to Valentina Moncada, a curator who was also one of his childhood friends, and whose mother was also a model, but it wasn't until he mentioned that it contained some photographs by a young Richard Avedon that Moncada's interest was piqued.

When they began to explore the boxes and cases, they found two decades worth of original prints, contact sheets, negatives and correspondence: images of Theo, not just by Avedon, but also Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Diane Arbus, Frances McLaughlin-Gill, Hermann Landshoff, Ted Croner and many others. Also among the images were almost all that remains of Jack and Joe's photographic partnership, under their studio's once-celebrated name Leombruno-Bodi. It has taken Saraceni and Moncada years to sort through the archive, confirming attributions and assembling chronologies. But finally, 50 years after three Americans first disembarked at Naples, their story has started to emerge from obscurity, the story of three



friends who – for a brief, bright moment – conquered Rome's fashion world, just as Rome itself seemed on the brink of conquering the wider world once more.

Where does a golden age begin? In the case of Rome's Dolce Vita decade, it can be pinpointed to a single day: 27 January, 1949 – the date Hollywood idol Tyrone Power married MGM starlet Linda Christian (best known now as the first-ever Bond girl, and nicknamed "Anatomic Bomb") at the ancient basilica of Santa Francesca Romana. The bride wore Sorelle Fontana and the groom a bespoke Caraceni suit. Outside the church, the carabinieri held back thousands of screaming fans, desperate to catch a glimpse of the matinée idol and his bombshell wife as they departed for an audience with Pope Pius XII. The whole spectacle – the exuberant pre-parties in gilded palazzi, the solemn Latin ceremony, the frantic crowds - had been carefully managed by Power's studio, 20th Century Fox, and was reported on in breathlessly excited newsreels and magazine spreads all over the world. And it shone the spotlight on Rome, reinventing itself to America as a starstruck, pleasure-filled place drenched in sunshine, wine and beauty.

At one time or another, in the following years, the city's population included Alain Delon, Audrey Hepburn, Ava Gardner, Carson McCullers, Christine Jorgensen, Cy Twombly, Gore Vidal, Ingrid Bergman, Irving Berlin, Jayne Mansfield, John Paul and Talitha Getty, Kay Thompson, Louis Armstrong, Orson Welles, Romy Schneider,

Shelley Winters, Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote, Ursula Andress, Willem de Kooning, William Faulkner and William Styron.

"Think about it," Saraceni says. "Spain was under Franco and England was rationed. And Berlin after World War II... well. So, if you wanted to have fun, you only had Paris and Rome." But Paris was dulled with a previous generation's nostalgia: for the days of Hemingway's A Moveable Feast (1964), and for the rose-tinted Montmartre of F Scott Fitzgerald, Henry Miller, Josephine Baker and Gertrude Stein. Rome, by contrast, was new, accelerated at high-speed into the middle of the 20th century by the aptly-named Italian miracolo economico after centuries as little more than an archaeological theme park. It exploded, doubling in size and population in a decade, as new apartment blocks tumbled out of the Seven Hills like dominoes. New autostrade, teeming with sleek, new Fiat 500s, raced outwards in every direction. New monuments were built alongside the old: the sleek, futuristic sweep of Termini train station, the vast curves of the Palazzetto dello Sport, and the gigantic film studio complex at Cinécitta – one of the few fascist enterprises to survive Mussolini's downfall, reborn as "Hollywood on Tiber".

Yet Rome was also startlingly, jarringly ancient. It was still illegal to permit a married couple to share a hotel room or to kiss on the street. The city's streets were regularly swamped by tides of the faithful flocking to St Peter's, and by shepherds singing carols at Christmas. Those same streets were still lined by grand palazzi – some



ABOVE: JACK LEMMON, JOAN COLLINS AND ROBERT WAGNER AT CAFFÉ DELL'EPOCA, ROME, 1961 RIGHT: AUDREY HEPBURN ON THE SET OF WAR AND PEACE, CINECITTÀ STUDIOS, 1955



still in the ownership of aristocratic families, but many invaded by Americans whose healthy dollar-to-lira exchange rate suddenly enabled them to possess pockets of spectacular Eternal City real estate. (Writing home, Vidal drily noted that the scene was "a bit on the sleepy side but the settings were splendid".) The two worlds collided head-on at parties thrown by Italo-American power couples such as Consuelo and Rudi Crespi, and Dorothy and Carlo di Frasso, where descendants of grand Roman houses (Borghese, Colonna, Orsini) mingled with a chaotic mix of actors, tycoons and scruffy bohemians — each side simultaneously seduced, shocked, fascinated and appalled by the other.

The map of American Rome was small. There was Via Condotti, at the foot of the Spanish Steps: the city's most elegant shopping thoroughfare. Via Margutta, an old street of carriage houses, which had become Rome's unofficial bohemian quarter and home to artists from Picasso and Cocteau onwards. Trastevere, full of restaurants and bars, where the party never ended (despite its proximity to the Vatican's disapproving walls). And there was Fregene, the beach lined with shoals of umbrella pines, where fashionable Rome went to play: a surreal paradise of Alfa Romeos, bikinis and miniature poodles. And then there was the other, real beach: Via Veneto, the "Roma Americana", a lazy, snaking boulevard, tilting out of the Pincian Gate and swinging gradually down to the Piazza Barberini, lined with cream stone hotels and mirror-and-walnut-lined bars, anchored by the ice-

cream coloured bulk of the American Embassy. The pavements here were filled with wicker chairs and precarious tables, where the day began with a morning espresso and ended in flashbulb-spangled darkness - and where, on any given night, transatlantic visitors could expect to run into unchaperoned, gloriously unedited stars. Like a sunburned Jayne Mansfield, bursting out of a Jessica Rabbit dress and giggling as Mickey Hargitay shovelled forkfuls of spaghetti into her mouth. Or Burt Lancaster, getting into a sidewalk fistfight. Or exiled royals - Farouk of Egypt, Soraya of Iran - holding their comically diminished courts. Or Truman Capote (with parrot) and Carson McCullers maintaining a wary mutual distance, waging the latest round of their literary feud. Or any one of Cinecittà's homegrown sirens (Elsa Martinelli, Sophia Loren, Gina Lollobrigida, Pier Angeli) arm-candying visiting Hollywood idols or aspiring moguls. Or a horde of jostling street photographers, boys with Vespas and Brownie cameras, doing a job so new they hadn't yet been christened paparazzi.

The writer Mary Chamberlain (a friend of Theo's and another American transplant) listed the street's inhabitants by strict caste: "refugees, newspapermen, artists, entertainers, one-time and perhaps sometime-again film producers, divorcées, and the young men and women who dignify their true profession of making love for money by calling themselves models, or actors, or guides."

Love for money. In post-war Italy, "American" meant money, after all: ever since the 1943 Allied landings, Italy had come to regard the US both as paradise and piggy bank. And, thanks to Hollywood, America had begun against its cautious instincts to fall for Italy, too: films like *Roman Holiday* (1953), *Three Coins in the Fountain* (1954) and *Rome Adventure* (1962) ushered in a whole new genre of transcontinental romcoms, between naive Americans and suspiciously suave, impeccably-suited Italian crooners.

...

This was the Rome – real and imagined – into which Theo Graham, Joe Leombruno and Jack Bodi arrived in 1956. Joe and Theo came first, for an assignment shooting the latest Italian footwear collections against the Capitoline marbles. They clearly fell for Rome on the spot: Joe reported back to Jack, telling him to close up shop in Manhattan and, just like that, they decamped from 63rd Street in New York to a new studio off the Via del Corso, Rome's bustling version of Main Street. And, in doing so, they set themselves up as photographers of choice for a fledgling fashion industry that was about to undergo a remarkable revolution. Rome had long boasted a tradition of fine artisan work, from pioneering tailors including Brioni and Caraceni to the furriers of Fendi. Throughout the Thirties and Forties, a local couture tradition had sprung up, led by Simonetta, the Sorelle Fontana, Fernanda Gattinoni and Roberto Capucci. And as Italy's ready-to-wear reputation began to boom after the war, they were joined by a host of newcomers such as Emilio Pucci, Laura Aponte, Irene Galitzine, and a youngster known only by his first name, Valentino. Biannual fashion shows in Rome and Florence drew international press and buyers, setting Italy's homegrown labels on the path to becoming household names worldwide.

Inevitably, Joe and Jack became the go-to team for US-based magazines suddenly keen to shoot Italian stories, and they rose spectacularly to the challenge. In common with other American photographers who discovered Rome at that time, like William Klein

and Henry Clarke, their photographs took a bold, graphic new quality, absorbing and refracting the city's shocking extremes: beauty and squalor, glamour and ugliness, surrealism and earthy vigour. In so doing they became part of a wave that transformed the conventional fashion image, breaking it out of airless studios and slyly artificial poses, and into a new era of provocation, drama and immediate sensuality. They

posed the model China Machado, once dubbed "probably the most beautiful woman in the world", in couture gowns, floating amidst the opulent folly of 1963's *Cleopatra* sets, and wrapped blonde Italian goddess Virna Lisi in swirling feather boas; took intimate, candid shots of Anna Magnani, Federico Fellini, and the rest of the Cinecittà greats at work; introduced Mediterranean beauties like Benedetta Barzini and Isabella Albonico to America, filling page after glossy page with their strong, dark-eyed beauty; and, inevitably, they photographed Theo, over and over again. In America, she'd reigned over the "junior" category, a breed of coltish, athletic models who modelled casual wear and separates for the approachable, affordable end of the market. But in Rome, surrounded by voluptuous curves, she stood out like a unicorn. As Iris Bianchi, a house model with the Sorelle Fontana, explains: "Oh, we Romans were nothing, just little girls. No one on the Via Veneto ever looked at us. The only thing I know is this: there were only three models in Rome that people noticed - tall, beautiful Americans - Theo Graham, Jo Patterson and Joan Whelan."

Joe and Jack made the most of the contrast, shooting Theo in endlessly unexpected situations: leaping out of aircraft in Pucci, posing nude and wild-haired for Lucky Strike, or simply stretched out and laughing on one of the sofas in their *superattico* apartment.

There's a lot of laughter in the Theo archive, actually: pictures snapped round Trastevere restaurant tables or at birthday parties, joking with model friends or playing up to the American-in-Rome stereotype for visiting photographers. And although the archive contains the obligatory coins-in-the-fountain shot at the Trevi Fountain, love wasn't part of the plan. By the time they arrived in Italy, Joe and Jack had already been a devoted couple for over a decade. And for Theo, getting over a brief, youthful marriage to American photographer Ted Croner and a relationship with band leader Artie Shaw, Rome wasn't planned for romance. But – just like in the movies – Italian suitors were persistent. Ever since the days of Henry James's

doomed heroines, the city had been cast as a battleground between Old World wiles and New World wealth (a trope that would be superbly updated by Tennessee Williams' *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone* (1961), a notoriously brutal depiction of the relationship between American fantasy and Italian amorality). And for American women, beauty had long been a currency in its own right. The American



NATALIE WOOD AND WARREN BEATTY SIGHTSEEING, ROME, 1962 models that Iris Bianchi remembers all made Italian marriages, in the end, teaming their flat Anglo-Saxon names to Roman multisyllables: Joan Whelan to photographer Johnny Moncada, Jo Patterson to famed hotelier Angelo Bettoja, and Theo Graham to Cinecittà producer Carlo Saraceni — a man she pointedly discouraged — but who, as her son concedes, gradually wore her down. And all three slowly settled into Roman lives and lifestyles, raising families and navigating the labyrinth of Italian custom. And they socialised: it's hard to imagine

living in Rome at that time and not embracing the excitement.

"It was a wonderful time," Joan Whelan Moncada recalls. "You just bumped into all these stars. And it was all so intimate, and so much fun. And, of course, everybody drank then. You'd go out and start with a Martini before dinner and then, of course, the wine would come out. I mean, we were never on the floor or anything, but we drank!"

Truman Capote might have qualified that last statement: a letter home in 1953 records Humphrey Bogart and John Huston in Rome, "half-drunk all day and dead-drunk all night, and once, believe it or not, I came to around six in the morning to find King Farouk doing the hula-hula in the middle of Bogart's bedroom". Enrico Carlo Saraceni agrees: "My mother said she'd never touched a drink before moving here. She always said that Italy was her ruin!"

As the Sixties dawned, though, the three friends all grew restless for change. Other Americans (Grace Mirabella, Ken Scott, Mike La Mendola and Jack Savage among them) had already begun to stamp their imprint on the Italian design scene. And when buyers from the upscale New York department store Henri Bendel tasked Joe with finding a hot new Italian knitwear talent, he and Theo simply came up with their own: Micia, named after Theo's Siamese cat. From that unlikely start, they built a successful international label, showing alongside the top ready-to-wear names in Florence, and selling all over

the world. Joe photographed, Theo modelled, and Jack designed the clothes, which were produced in a workroom above their photographic studio. Aesthetically, the label was of a piece with their photography: graphic, bold, daring, youthful, modern. And it would extend, in Joe and Jack's case, into a career in fashion design which would ultimately see them leave photography behind.

Rome might have proclaimed itself the Eternal City, but its mid-century golden age wouldn't last. By the time Fellini's notorious *La Dolce Vita* premiered in 1960, the era's demise was already a matter of popular discussion. But it would be a slow, lavish decline. "My childhood gave me the impression that the world was a very



LEFT: ELIZABETH TAYLOR AND EDDIE FISCHER ARE SERENADED, 1961 BELOW: (FROM L-R) JACK, THEO AND JOE

glamorous place," Valentina Moncada ruefully reflects. "When I was little, Audrey Hepburn and her son would come to birthday parties, and I'd see models like Veruschka whenever I visited my father's studio. But then the Seventies started and everything changed." She reels off the Dolce Vita's death knells like a rosary: the country's catastrophic economic collapse and the advent of crippling austerity measures; the government's slide, after two decades of stability, into power-swapping farce; the riots and mass protests; Talitha Getty dying from a heroin

overdose, and the violent abduction of her teenage stepson John Paul Getty III; the rise of the terrorist Red Brigades, culminating in the kidnapping and murder of the Italian prime minister Aldo Moro. The discovery of Moro's body coincided with Moncada's 18th birthday. "It was a dreadful awakening," she remembers, "to a different world." Her mother Joan, drifting in and out of her memories, sighs, "Oh, it was all so exciting. And then, well, it wasn't so exciting any more."

Everything disappeared: the stars, the glamour, the hype, the magic. And – although Theo, Jack and Joe lived a brief charmed life, in a golden city, in one of its most thrilling moments in history – little of their moment would survive. Rome's heyday would recede into the background, its momentary stardom forgotten, as Milan established itself as the unassailable centre of Italian fashion.

"How does one begin to record and track the play of one's life?" Those were Joe Leombruno's words and that was what he tried to do, in the long years between Jack's death and his own, working on drafts for a memoir he would never complete. Written in a jagged, bright blue scrawl, his notes drift between cities and decades, vaguely tethered to some private chronology and anchored by urgent, underlined headlines: "Things To Remember"; "People We Photographed"; "Places We Visited"; "Celebrities"; "Hollywood"; "Models"; "What We Did To Get Here". Reading the stapled sheaf of pages is both

fascinating and desperately frustrating, like watching a jumbled home movie with the sound switched off. There's a vague, compelling sense of a world filled with sunshine and laughter, and the sense that an extraordinary story about mid-century Rome lies barely out of reach.

Joe wrote words. And Theo kept pictures. And long after Jack and Joe had left Rome – footloose to the end, flitting from Portugal to Tuscany to the Hamptons – she stayed. Widowed in her fifties, she lived in her Roman apartment to the end of her life: never absorbed in Italian life and yet never able to leave. It's hard not to think of her when reading Mary Chamberlain's 2001 novel, *The Palazzo*, which fictionalised Theo as the beautiful,





LEFT: DAVID NIVEN AT A NEWS KIOSK IN ROME, 1961 RIGHT: FEDERICO FELLINI SUPERVISES HANGING A GIANT POSTER OF ANITA EKBERG IN 1962



superficially dutiful American wife, desperate inside but always picture perfect on the surface: "the long slim legs, the wheat-coloured hair, the wide brown-eyed directness, the scrubbed skin, the antiseptic smile." Chamberlain's novel is equally intriguing when it comes to the native Roman stance on Americans — superficially welcoming, subtly antagonistic and eternally suspicious. Fiction though it may be, it hints at the complexity of establishing a real cross-cultural life. Were any of them ever really at home? The elegant Joan Whelan Moncada, almost the only surviving member of the group, certainly seems so but it's impossible not to notice how easily her fluid Italian splinters into half-century-old Noo Yawk at the ends of her sentences, just as Iris Bianchi (transplanted from Rome to Midtown Manhattan) still drags out every lazy Italian vowel; Anna MagnAAAAAAni. Sophia LOOOOren.

And the generation of not-quite-Italian, not-quite-American children I speak with — Georgia Bettoja, Valentina Moncada, Enrico Carlo Saraceni — remember childhoods spattered with Fourth of July parties, American punch and open-air *lingua-originale* American movies. Welcomed, lionised, yet held at a distance, a young Pier Paolo Pasolini would memorably summarise the city's post-war arrivals as "freeloaders, foreigners, hicks and pilgrims". It's hard not to think of Theo, or any of her generation of Roman Americani, when reading Pasolini's words, or indeed, when coming across a bittersweet line

from Chamberlain's own memoir of expatriate life: "I'm an American. I live in America. I stay in Rome. No Americans really live in Rome."

Today, the Via Veneto is a permanently off-season ghost. Its days of movie-star glamour have gone, replaced by posters offering happy-hour deals and free wi-fi. Americans still come, though, to sit in the sun at those same rickety outdoor tables and to take their pictures next to old photographs of a vanished black-and-white world: Gregory Peck squinting at the camera at Harry's Bar, Ingrid Bergman in a paper hat at Caffé Strega, Sophia Loren laughing with Cary Grant outside That's Amore. In the evening, when Rome's ice-cream skies go dark, the boulevard still dances with strands of lights, strung between the pavement cafes and glowing at the porticoes of the grand international hotels Hotel Majestic Roma, Grand Hotel Plaza, Grand Hotel Flora and The Westin Excelsior.

Halfway down the slope, beyond the American Embassy, the city's vast Martini sign still blares over the scene like a corporate-sponsored surrogate moon. But instead of preying paparazzi, today's street is lined with menu-wielding waiters and touts offering passes to the "super-sexy" Cica Cica Boom strip club. Teenagers are swarming outside one of the more recent American imports, the Hard Rock Café. Walking past, an elderly *signora* pulls her fur coat close, tuts and tugs her husband's arm. "*Ma, com'era bella...?*"

Wasn't it beautiful? ENDS









#### Essentials No. 05

Photographs by Sam Hofman



01 Onion Chutney by Cartwright
and Butler – £5 02 Hot Relish by
Todd – £7.50 03 Garlic Mayonnaise
by The Garlic Farm – £4 04 Sriracha
Chilli Sauce by Flying Goose – £7
05 Pesto Genovese by Primvs – £15
06 Black Truffle Vinaigrette by San Pietro
a Pettine – £20 07 Blackcurrant
Mustard by Edmond Fallot – £6
08 Aceto Balsamico di Modena by
The Olive Oil Co – £15 09 Ketchup
by Wilkin & Sons – £2 10 Chutney by
The East India Company – £5



















#### Essentials No. 06





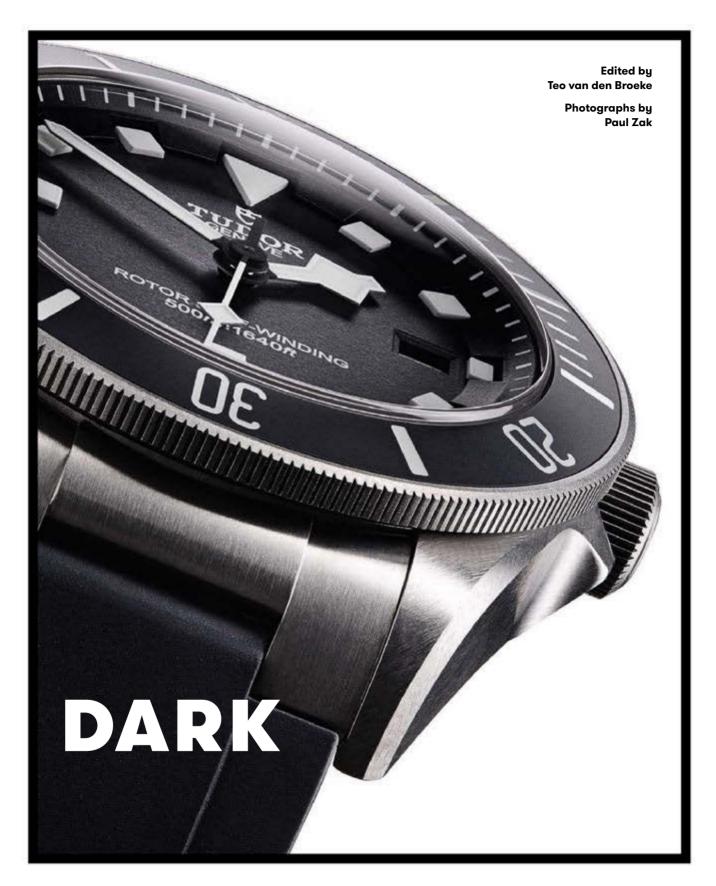
 $01 \, \text{Bally} - \pounds 340$   $02 \, \text{Camper X Gosha Rubchinskiy} - \pounds 110$   $03 \, \text{John Lobb} - \pounds 400$   $04 \, \text{Common Projects} - \pounds 265$   $05 \, \text{Tom Ford} - \pounds 450$   $06 \, \text{Polo Ralph Lauren} - \pounds 100$   $07 \, \text{Tommy Hilfiger} - \pounds 90$   $08 \, \text{Lacoste} - \pounds 120$   $09 \, \text{Tiger of Sweden} - \pounds 160$   $10 \, \text{Gucci} - \pounds 325$ 











TUDOR Pelagos, 42mm titanium case, rubber strap, £2,840





JAEGER-LECOULTRE

Deep Sea Chronograph Vintage Cermet, 44mm cermet/titanium case,
calfskin strap with varnished edge, £12,500



TAG HEUER
Formula 1 Calibre 6 Automatic, 41mm titanium carbide-coated steel case, perforated rubber strap, £1,675



OMEGA De Ville Hour Vision Co-Axial Chronometer, 41 mm stainless-steel case, alligator-leather strap, £6,760



BLANCPAIN

Ocean Commitment Bathyscaphe Chronograph Flyback Limited Edition
(250 pieces), 43mm ceramic case, sail-canvas strap, £14,000



RICHARD MILLE RM 011 Black Night, NTPT (North Thin Ply Technology) carbon case, rubber strap, limited to 100 pieces, £104,500



AUDEMARS PIGUET Royal Oak Offshore Chronograph, 44mm steel case, Méga Tapisserie pattern dial, rubber strap, £18,700



CHOPARD LUC XPS Poinçon de Genève, 39.5mm platinum case, alligator strap, £16,560

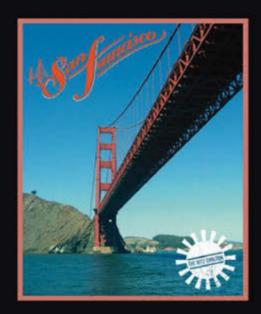


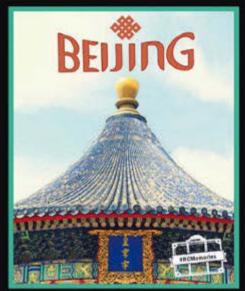
BREMONT ALT1-P Blue, 43mm stainless-steel case, embossed leather strap, £3,895

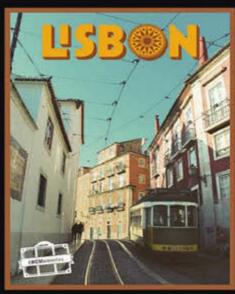
#### DISCOVER TRAVEL MEMORIES WORTHY OF AN ENCORE

From exploring Portugal in the vibrant 1960s to learning how to navigate a local Japanese market using chef instincts, some of *Esquire*'s favorite writers retell their most memorable travel experiences from around the globe.

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#### **TRAVELLERS' TALES**

Illustrations by Ping Zhu

Memories of brilliant excursions — and otherwise

#### **BACK TO FRANCE**

#### N. . NI - I. - I - - -

#### By Nicholas Shakespeare



The past lies buried in a thinner topsoil than we realise. Our neighbour Ellen in Tasmania, a widow, was married to an Englishman who fought in World War I. Not long ago, I heard a tap-tap, and there she was, coming towards me on his ebony cane. I thought of Ellen's walking-stick when I accompanied my father back to France to unearth memories of his days there, first as a student immediately after World War II, then as a teacher, next as a

journalist, and latterly as a diplomat. He hadn't visited Paris since 1961. Images from his past slowed his step from the moment we arrived at the Gare du Nord train station.

"Last time I was here was to welcome the Windsors. They'd arrived on the boat-train with their three or four ghastly dogs and I'd been sent by the ambassador to greet them officially on their return to Paris. Wallis suddenly recognised me and turned to the Duke, 'Oh, darling, there's that nice Mr Shakespeare come to meet us.'"

The Duke had given up his throne like Lear, and appeared miserable the entire time. Complimented on his house outside Paris, the former Edward VIII and Emperor of India murmured, "Nice place, wrong country."

Other sites produced other memories. The bar at the Crillon where my father drank when he was a *Times* correspondent. The gold-leafed British Embassy office when he was private secretary to Lord Gladwyn, meeting, among other eminences, President de Gaulle. The gaudy Travellers' Club in the Champs-Élysées, where my father suddenly remembered a discreet, elite dining society: Les Misérables. He had been its secretary for three years.

Unmentioned in the history books but founded by Duff Cooper, Britain's first ambassador to France after the war, Les Misérables, which comprised never more than 30 members, brought together →

monthly the leading French personalities of the day, together with prominent members of the British community, like Wing-Commander Yeo-Thomas, who had worked underground in Paris during the war and was tortured by the Gestapo.

"You knew the White Rabbit?"

"I knew him quite well. He was very helpful to me."

My father, then young and nervous, recalled Yeo-Thomas as an avuncular figure, bald with a clean-shaven, shiny face. The French members were even more impressive. They included Pierre Mendès France (who became Prime Minister); Hubert Beuve-Méry (founder of *Le Monde*); Philippe de Rothschild and George Pompidou (later France's President).

"You knew Pompidou?..."

"I'd sit beside him at dinner at the Hôtel Plaza Athénée. It was a very cosy thing. You talked about everything you liked, no theme, no speeches."

But the image that stopped me with the crunch of a ferrule on a nugget was still to come. "Oh, and also on the French side was the Prefect of Police, Maurice Papon."

"You knew Papon!"

"We treated him as someone of immense prestige."

In fact, my father recalled, of the members of Les Misérables around that table, all those personalities who shaped and directed post-war France, Maurice Papon was accorded the greatest respect. "But..."

"I know. Forty years later, it turned out he'd been a shocking collaborator who had organised 'death trains'. He was tried and convicted of crimes against humanity."

#### LEST WE FORGET THE FIELD TRIP

#### By Sam Parker



"Remember boys, some of these men weren't much older than you."

We nodded at our teacher as we spread out to find our surnames in the hot marble, wondering if the soldiers could be distant relatives — our grandad's grandad, maybe. We didn't wonder for long. It was hot enough that day to make the back of your knees sweat, so we ran off to do what 10-year-old boys do: shout and punch and jump on each other,

while the rows of perfect white graves around us wobbled in the haze like teeth being pulled from the earth.

The school trip to Belgium was an attempt to educate us in the importance of solemnity. Like church on a Sunday, there were moments you had to keep your head down when you didn't really understand why. Like when the old man played the bugle at the Last

Post, and some of us chuckled at the ripening fart-sound of the opening note. Or when we were shown the great ice-cream scoops still left in the earth by the shelling, and started playing British bulldog up the sides while the bewildered tour guide looked on. Or when we were encouraged to leave a comment in the guestbook at the German cemetery, and someone — Tim Coxford, I suspect — left a joke about the World Cup. Show some respect they kept saying. Bored and squirming, we tried.

That day, I found myself alone for a moment eating my packed lunch on a park bench, when a girl from the year above sat next to me. She had frizzy curls, dungarees on and was a foot taller than I was. She started playing with my hair while her friends lingered nearby, laughing.

"Are you going to the Last Night Disco?" she asked. The Last Night Disco was scheduled for the last night of our trip. Everyone was going.

I looked at her mouth and nodded. "Good. We can dance together. Make sure you look cool." It sounded like a threat.

On the night of the disco, my room-mate John and I got ready in our hotel. I wore my best jeans, a matching denim shirt and Nike trainers with an air bubble in them, sprayed myself with Lynx and combed great globules of radioactive-blue gel through my fringe until it stood up like a statue. We marched to the hall and took our place on one side of the great divide, with the boys showing off and firing glances at the girls as a machine pumped smoke into the air. I kept trying to catch her eye, but I couldn't.

Eventually, the first bars of Take That's "Back For Good" rang out, the lights dimmed and the couples came together in the middle to sway awkwardly in each other's arms. I began a long, self-conscious walk around the perimeter, peering into the shadows. I don't remember much of what they tried to teach us about war and sacrifice and brave young men during that week all those years ago, but the sight of the girl with frizzy hair dancing with someone else? Some moments you really do never forget.

#### THE LADY WITH THE RED LIPS

#### By Josip Novakovich



Nice place to visit. I had often heard that phrase, and I certainly agreed with it when I made it to Montreal for the first time. I had already been to most North American cities, but because I couldn't get a visa to Canada, Montreal remained a challenge, and so when I could, I visited for a literary festival, Blue Metropolis, where I met a few famous writers,

such as Richard Ford, who were playful and humorous.

On the first night of my stay there, I went to a party where several well-known writers, such as Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje,



were in attendance. In the crowded room, I stepped on a man's toe, the tip of a crimson leather shoe. I said excuse me, but the elderly man with a silvery beard and hair didn't respond. It impressed me that he apparently registered no pain but surprised me that he didn't even look at me or blink.

I asked a new friend, David, "What's up with this man? I said excuse me, and he didn't respond."

"It's Robbe-Grillet," he said, "and he'd rather die than speak English."

"Really? That's impossible. He must have died a long time ago – he is in literary history books. I mean, like Celine, Derrida, and such."

"No, he's very much alive and loves Montreal."

The next day, Robbe-Grillet gave a speech, translated into English by a jolly young woman, and said, "I am very glad to be here, especially after I was interviewed by the customs officer at the airport. The officer looked at my passport and then at me, and said, 'You can't be Robbe-Grillet. I read him in college 20 years ago.' Well, what can I say, I am still alive, at least I believe so."

Montreal was a new sensation: chansons from street cafes created an aura of Paris; Schwartz's succulent smoked meat on rye bread on St Laurent gave a bit of old immigrant Jewish flavour; and fashionably and casually dressed young people sitting outside even in the chilly weather, with a few snowflakes whisking by, gave a literally cool atmosphere.

A friend of mine said, "'Beautiful Losers' is about the people sitting outside."

"How do you know?" I replied.

"I know," he said. "I live here, and why do you think Leonard Cohen coined that phrase?" Oh yes, Leonard Cohen just then sang out of the café, "And there are no letters in the mailbox," wonderfully desperate.

"Not a bad way to be a loser," I replied.

And in addition to that, there were no Starbucks there, so I went into a local café, Second Cup, in the Latin Quarter, and got a macchiato. It was joltingly good. As I looked over to the next table, a fantastically beautiful woman, with thick, curly, black hair and full red lips, looked over at me, took a sip from her cappuccino, and slowly washed the foam from her upper lip with her tongue. I didn't know how to respond to what seemed like an invitation for a beginning of a beautiful friendship. As I was sitting with a student of mine, whose manuscript I was critiquing, I didn't respond, except for an occasional glance. On her way out, she strutted and gave me a sidelong glance, with a bit of contempt

in it. What a beautiful city Montreal is! I am so glad to have visited, but it would be amazing to live here. And when people asked me, what is your dream place to live? I usually replied, New York City, but I am not a millionaire, so forget it. So, Montreal, definitely Montreal!

Forward, ten years later: now I live in Montreal. The chansons are still there but most of them sound like ditties sung for 12-year-olds. I can no longer bear to eat smoked meat and other disgustingly fat and salty meat products. And I can't afford to buy French wine to wash it all down, as bottles in Montreal are exuberantly taxed, so a decent one that would cost \$20 in New York costs 44 here — enough to ruin the taste. And the refreshing wisps of snow have turned into a metre of it, some of it iced over, so that a few times I have fallen hard, amazed that I hadn't cracked my femur or at least my wrist. And that café on St-Denis has been transformed into a huge Starbucks.

True enough, there are red-lipped woman there, but as this is the centre of Montreal's red-light district, and Montreal has 5,000 registered sex workers, some of them are hookers. So, the image of a liberated, seductive stranger is something that I now have to revise - even when I visited, most likely a hooker was trying to play a trick. Now add to all this the fact that half of my salary whisks away in taxes; the food in restaurants is overtaxed and expensive; my kids, because they don't speak good French, can't get jobs here; the beautiful French that I heard is actually a nasal sounding Quebecois (which you can learn how to love, of course); I fall off my bike riding over potholes; and that some of the people lounging and looking good in front of cafes are my unemployed former students (some are employed as bar tenders at night), I now can complete the first sentence. Nice place to visit, but not to live. And another cliché sentence, which is a cliché because it's a truism: be careful what you wish because you might get it. And then you'll have to live with it.

All right, I invite you to visit! I guarantee fabulous sights and times in Montreal. It is truly a wonderful place, most European of North American cities, a new sensation.

#### ROMANCE IN MY CRIMEA

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#### By Mikhail Shishkin

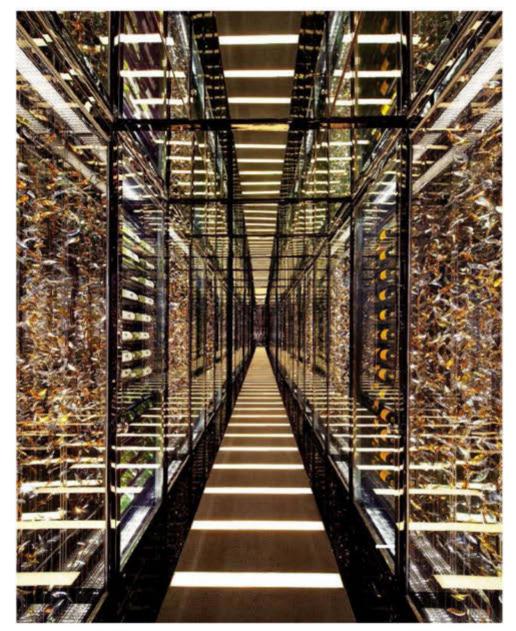


For many years I'd been planning a trip to the Crimea, but kept putting it off. I wanted to see "my" favourite spots again — Sudak, Koktebel, Novyy Svet. They became mine that first time I made it down there, aged 18. I remember getting a call from Viva Sofronitskaya, a girl I was hopelessly in love with (and who was partial to my friend,

the brilliant Mitya Gaiduk).

"You coming down to Crimea with us?"

It was September, university studies had just begun.



LEFT: THE WINE CELLAR AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, HONG KONG. BELOW: A COCONUT DISH AT TIN LUNG HEEN



#### **HONG KONG**

#### **West Kowloon**

As befits its soaring presence above the International Commerce Centre, this hotel is a showstopper. Don't miss the two Michelin-starred Tin Lung Heen restaurant on the 102nd floor, where chef Paul Lau's refined take on Cantonese cooking — such as his signature barbecued Iberian pork with honey — is more than a match for the view. Better yet, book a place at the chef's table. Described by Lau as an "interactive dining experience", every aspect of the menu is carefully tailored to you and your guests for a unique experience you'll want to relive again and again.

## MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS...



#### Fine dining in the world's finest settings — only at the Ritz-Carlton

Unforgettable can mean any number of things — all of them exceptional when it comes to The Ritz-Carlton. There is, of course, the world-class hospitality where your every need will be anticipated throughout your stay. Then there's the internationally renowned dining experiences.

Whether it's the authentic Cantonese dim sum that is showcased in the two Michelin-starred Tin Lung Heen in Hong Kong, or the seasonal eight-course tasting menu at San Francisco's much-lauded Parallel 37, when you book a

table at one of its fêted fine dining establishments, you can look forward to some of the most exceptional food and drink to be found anywhere in the world.

And it doesn't stop there. Visit any one of The Ritz-Carlton hotels worldwide and you will be sure to leave with great memories of once-in-a-lifetime experiences and precious shared evenings. They add up to golden moments that you'll continue to hold on to long after your holiday ends. #RCMemories







#### **JAPAN**

#### Tokyo

The 45th floor of a luxury hotel in the heart of Tokyo might not be the first place you'd expect to find the perfect recreation of a 200-year-old Kokushoan tea house, but then unexpected is what The Ritz-Carlton does so well. Whether you use this unique private dining space at the award-winning Hinokizaka restaurant to propose — as one guest did recently — is, of course, up to you. One thing's for certain, though: any visit here is sure to be something you and your guests never forget.

#### **USA**

#### San Francisco

When chef Michael Rotondo took the reins at Parallel 37, he found inspiration in the Bay Area's abundance of fresh, local ingredients and world-class wines to create a menu that is a high-end homage to all things seasonal. Rotondo has said he considers success as a chef to be achieving "the complete food and wine experience". His food- and wine-pairing degustation menu at the chef's table is the very pinnacle of that ideal — a very special dining experience you're sure to savour.



LEFT: OYSTERS ON THE HALF SHELL AT PARALLEL 37. BELOW: THE GRAND ENTRANCE AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, SAN FRANCISCO



RIGHT: THE PLUSH INTERIOR OF THE NIRVANA RESTAURANT, BAHRAIN. ABOVE: GOURMET INDIAN DELICACIES ARE THE HOUSE SPECIALITY



#### **BAHRAIN**

#### Manama

From its tranquil beachside setting to its lush, landscaped lawns, a stay at The Ritz-Carlton on the north coast of Bahrain is a masterclass in elegance. Nowhere is that more evident than at Nirvana, where chef Mahipal Singh has elevated the dishes of his North Indian home into an artform, as his legendary butter chicken (a memory of his mother's own recipe) attests. But, he insists, it is heart that is the real secret of Nirvana's success and he promises you'll never forget its fine cuisine served with the warmth and generosity of home.

"When?"

"Today."

We had no tickets or money.

"'Course I am!"

We met at Kursk Station. Viva, long-legged, tanned, was dressed in ragged shorts and T-shirt. And there *he* was: tall, solidly built, high-cheekboned. Mitya and I had been in the same class at school. He was a musical prodigy, tipped by all and sundry to become a great pianist. And not only did he know Russian poetry inside out, he was even better at footy than the rest of us.

The southbound trains were chocker, with no tickets to be bought even if you had the money.

We ran the length of the train cajoling the porters, but clearly didn't inspire their trust. One finally put us in his compartment and off we set. When he twigged that instead of pocketing the price of three tickets he'd be getting bugger all, he flew into a rage and threatened to chuck us out of the speeding train. But, eyeing Viva's bare legs, he relented and allowed us to stay on until the next station. In the meantime, we set about drinking warm vodka. The roasting carriage had no fridge or air conditioning.

The porter told us about his fiancée Nadia, who, according to her doctors, had cancer and was beyond saving.

"So Granny, she says to me, you just go and make a baby! So we make one and pff! It's gone, proper miracle! No cancer!"

We spent all night drinking vodka, and the next day found us in Simferopol.

A piecemeal journey brought us into Sudak after nightfall, and we set off at once towards the sound of the sea. We absolutely had to have a dip. The sea was agleam, the waves didn't seem excessive, so we stripped off and, naked, flung ourselves into the swell, and then Viva started yelling and almost choked. In the end, having all swallowed a lot of water, we were glad just to have made it back to shore in one piece.

We kipped right there on the beach, to be greeted come morning by the bare mountains and the Crimean sun.

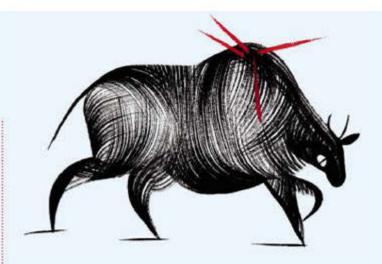
We sneaked into vineyards and pilfered grapes. Stuffed them into my trousers, knotted into a bag, then sold them to tourists down the market.

Our stomachs were empty, our spirits high. Some oldster let us sleep over at his – he had rooms going empty, anyway, and beds to spare.

We went on walks to Novyy Svet, to Koktebel. Our evenings were spent drinking cheap local wine and listening to the surf. I looked on at Mitya and Viva's happiness and thought myself profoundly wretched. Foolish kid! I'd no inkling that this, too, was happiness.

Sitting by the sea one night, we were approached by a gang of five. One thing led to another. We were beaten up for being Muscovites. If we'd been from elsewhere, they would've beaten us for some other reason. In the morning we looked at each other's faces, puffy and bruised, and split our sides laughing.

A couple of years later, Mitya won the Tchaikovsky Competition. And then tragedy struck. He was paralysed, and died a few days later. Now Crimea is "ours" — it's no longer mine — I've no desire to go back there.



#### THE BRAVERY OF THE FORCADOS

**By Derek Robinson** 



In 1968, I flew from London to Portugal in a 707 so old that when we circled Lisbon, water rained from the air-conditioning, something to do with a pressure change. The cabin crew mopped the passengers with blankets. I took the ferry across the Tagus to a suburb where everything – houses, trees, cars, people – was stained rust-red by the steel works. A symbol of modern progress,

they told me. I travelled to Albufeira, then a small fishing village. On my first morning, two cars had a fender-bender and the drivers traded blame, each beginning "O Senhor", "the gentleman". Not the sort of dialogue you hear in Manhattan. Later, I saw arrow scars on men returning from army service in Mozambique and Angola. Obviously, they did things differently in Portugal.

I was there because I'd saved enough money working as a copywriter in New York to sit in the sun for a year and write a bestseller. It turned out unpublishable guff, so I went to the bullfight in Lisbon instead, where I saw the *Forcados Amadores* display courage that was simultaneously insane, primitive and superb. The *forcados* made the running of the bulls at Pamplona look like walking the dog in the park. In Pamplona you can always run away. The *forcados* stand their ground.

They appeared halfway through the programme, a team of eight plus the *cabo*, their leader. They wore a sober, 18th-century uniform: white knee stockings, buttoned breeches, cummerbund, collar and tie, a short jacket heavily embroidered, and knitted green cap. A trumpeter announced the entry of the bull. He was full of fight, rammed the barrier, chased anything human and showed impressive acceleration. A few *bandarilhas* (small javelins) in the neck were meant to slow him down but only infuriated him. Eventually, he came to a halt. He was a ton of angry muscle and horns hungry for blood. The *cabo* climbed into the ring and walked, one hand on hip, with a slight swagger, towards the bull. The arena was silent; you could hear the bull snort. The *cabo* gestured, inviting the bull, quietly insulting him. As he got nearer, he slowed his walk and stamped his foot. Bulls are shortsighted but this one saw his target. Now was the

moment when you held your breath: a killing machine was about to launch himself at this small, solitary individual.

The bull charged, head down. The cabo jumped, a fraction of a second before the impact, grabbed the horns and clung on. With luck, the rest of the team arrived, hurled themselves at the bull and forced it to a standstill. Huge ovation. At a command, the team released and ran, except the man on the tail. He left last.

Or maybe not. Many things can go wrong: the cabo might miss the horns, fall and get gored or trampled, yet if he is able to stand still, he would have to carry out the performance again and sometimes again. To see a bloodied *cabo* limping as he challenged a bull for the third time is to witness courage that is unforgettable. It might be crazy (forcados have died in the ring) but it is glorious. The bull is never killed (not in the ring, anyway) but the cabo, who may be a middle-aged family man with an ordinary job, can get a lap of honour. Bouquets are thrown. A small reward for risking death. Why do they do it? Simple. Forcados are among those folk who find everyday existence is too safe.

#### WAITING **FOR GODOT**

#### By Lawrence Norfolk



Journeys are for people who know where they're going. Travel can land you anywhere. Or nowhere. With more than 20 years hindsight, I think of my Sarajevo episode as the mobile equivalent of Waiting for Godot. It started in Vienna, late in 1992. My first novel was out and parts of it were set in the second Austro-Turkish War fought in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In a bar, I met Karl Wendl who had lately been spending time in those parts, reporting for News, the

Austrian equivalent of Time.

"It's the same as your book," he told me as we drank. "Same places. Same atrocities. But with submarines."

The submarines were Serbian, relics of the former-Yugoslavia's fleet, based somewhere called Kotor, presumably on the coast. Wouldn't it be interesting to find them? That's how it started. I returned to the UK, told my then-girlfriend-now-wife I was going on a perfectly-safe submarine hunt and (unrelated but relevant) also had all my wisdom teeth removed.

A traveller is someone who eats, a Danish friend once told me. But when I returned to Vienna, a week later, my stitched-up gums were still bleeding and I was unable to chew anything other than soft cheese. And we were not going submarine-hunting, Karl told me on arrival. It was November 1992 and the encirclement of Sarajevo was about to become an actual siege. It was not yet so serious that Susan Sontag would come and direct her famous production of Waiting for Godot (in which Godot, like Bosnia's so-called allies, fails to appear in either act), but even so there was sniper fire, the marketplace had been mortared, the library burned and the UN could only get in by diving white-painted C-130 Hercules transports on to the potholed runway while firing missile-diverting flares. That was enough to be getting on with.

"We're going by car," Karl told me.

Karl, myself and photographer Riccardo piled into a white VW Golf and set off. We got caught speeding outside Vienna, bought cured sausage and bread in Hungary and the same day drove into Zvornik, crossed the bridge and entered Bosnia.

With hindsight, trying to chew the increasingly tough Hungarian sausage using only my front teeth provided some much-needed comic relief. At the time it was about as funny as the dead bodies, sub-zero temperatures, the prevailing air of extreme hatred and being shot at. We drove through checkpoints manned by armed track-suited yobs to Sarajevo where I interviewed the theatre's intelligent and cultured former director (yes, a Waiting for Godot fan), who told me the solution to Bosnia's problems was simple. All the Muslims should be killed.

The other thing we did – this was my true *Godot* experience – was count cars. The point was to know what lay ahead. Cars coming the other way meant the road was open. But a long gap with no cars meant trouble, perhaps. Or perhaps not. In a war, there might be anything around the next corner. Of course there were always gaps. But we just continued. Even when the gaps lengthened. On we went in our Golf, travelling into the unknown.

So what happened? Karl, Riccardo and I got shot at, but the bullets and mortar rounds missed. The sausage got harder but my gums stopped bleeding. The uncertainty has proved harder to write about. But I console myself that I'm not alone in that. There's a reason Godot fails to turn up. Twice.

#### A FEAR OF TRAVEL

#### **By Brock Clarke**



In 1991, when I was 22, I travelled to Galway, Ireland, to meet up with a beautiful girl with whom I was in love and who was living there. Galway, pretty Galway, with its quays, its fog, its fiddles and its winding narrow streets. On one of those streets there was a rental car agency from which I'd rented a car, so I might drive the beautiful girl around western Ireland and where, because of my expert driving, I guess, she would fall as deeply in love with me as I already was with her. She was a year

younger than me, but much more mature seeming, especially in Ireland, about which she seemed to know everything, although I feel → the need to point out, in advance, she had never driven a car there: that was one thing about which she didn't know everything.

That was my plan. For months, back home in grimy provincial upstate New York, I'd practised driving a stick shift, because I had never driven a car with a standard transmission, and knew that whatever car I rented in Galway, it would have a standard transmission, and if I wanted to make the beautiful girl fall in love with me as I motored her around western Ireland, I would have to learn to drive a stick. I learned, and as I learned, I pictured myself successfully downshifting as I drove to Dingle. But before I did that, I would first have to pull out of the rental car place. I popped the clutch, put the car in first, pulled to the left side of the narrow street, as I knew was law in Ireland. I thought, I'm doing it! And maybe the beautiful girl thought the same, because she smiled at me. I smiled back and, while smiling back, I ended up pulling too far to the left of the narrow street, thus sheering off the driver's side mirror of a car parked there. I kept driving. The rental car bucked as I ground its gears. After a few blocks, I pulled over and looked at the beautiful girl. She wasn't smiling any more. She was sitting back against the seat, facing straight ahead, her eyes closed. Who knew what she was picturing but I was willing to bet it wasn't Dingle. I wasn't picturing it anymore, either. So, I turned around and returned the car to the rental car place (miraculously my own passenger side mirror was intact), and then for the rest of my two weeks in Galway I was impotent.

Well! After that, I didn't much feel like travelling anymore, and neither would you. And neither would the beautiful girl, who, years later, after she'd moved back to the States, agreed to marry me. We've been mostly happy ever since, although we haven't left home much, and only when I feel like maybe it's time to make another trip do I allow myself remember why.

#### MY ALTER EGO SAVED ME

#### By Liz Jensen



The summer I became Suzie Black, two forces ruled my young life: the compulsion to escape Britain and a crush on the Chinese language. "I'm going to work in Taiwan," I told everyone. "And learn Mandarin."

It was a crude, self-catapulting mechanism. If enough people believed I was going to the island where the cheap toys came from (did I even know where it was on the map?) then I'd have to go.

The jet-lagged brain is fly-paper: random images fly in and stick, and three decades on they're still there. The seething, mountain-

ringed crater of Taipei. Stalls bristling with Lucky Money and chickens' feet. Schoolkids with razored hair. Swarming mopeds. From



a hostel called Amigo's, I rang the American Top 40 station and told some lies.

"Come to the Hilton coffee shop in an hour," said the boss man.

"It's not what we can do for you, it's what you can do for us. There's
a... situation."

Downtown, I tripped in a pothole and broke a shoe heel. I bought some gum, chewed it like a maniac and used it as glue. (Don't try this as a footwear repair solution. It sucks.)

"What do you think of communism?" boss man asked, stirring his coffee.

Was communism the "situation?" I was hot and sweaty and it was 3am in my head. I hadn't expected Mao to pop up, or guessed that boss man might well be CIA. I was a young moron fresh off a plane, with chewing-gum holding her shoe together.

"I'm not sure it's working out that well," I mustered.

Boss man roared with laughter – "so British!" – then told me "the situation": a DJ had fallen sick and they needed someone else playing Billy Joel. "Tonight. So, what name do you use on air?"

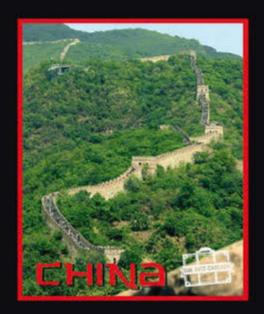
"Tonight" scared me. But a new name, a new me, blossomed in my head like a glorious flower.

A few hours later, Suzie Black made her debut "flying a desk". She was too thrown by all the alien levers and dials to utter more then ten words. But that night, a tight-lipped non-communist turntabling 70 per cent of the vinyl at the right speed was enough for boss man.

Luck struck again. The sick DJ wanted a break — and Suzie had a job. She lodged with a family who called her *Wai-gwo-ren*: the Foreigner. She was fine with that. Being Suzie the Foreigner beat the crap out of being Liz the Fucked-Up Mess. Suzie was fearless. Through shameless mimicry she faked a chirpy DJ personality. She developed a passion for black, sulphur-smelling 100-year-eggs, took Chinese lessons and smoked Long Life cigarettes. She watched the horizontal rain of two typhoons and hung out with Jya-Jya, a beautiful bar girl with alarming religious visions. While enjoying the courtship of a handsome Chinese professor, she had a wild affair with an American Vietnam vet whose nightmares shook the room.

When it was time to go back, Suzie Black blew smoke at me in the mirror and said, "Liz, I think you need me."

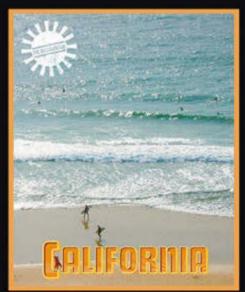
She was right. We've been together ever since. ENDS



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Photographs by Jon Gorrigon Fashion by Catherine Hayward

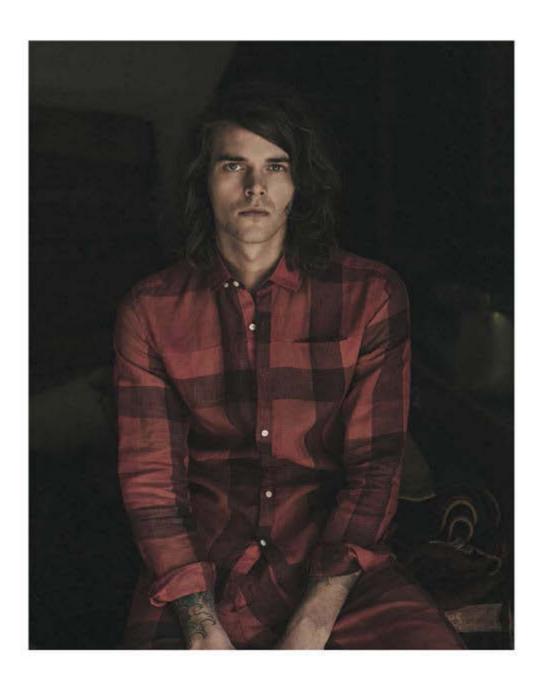


### PALLAS ATHENA

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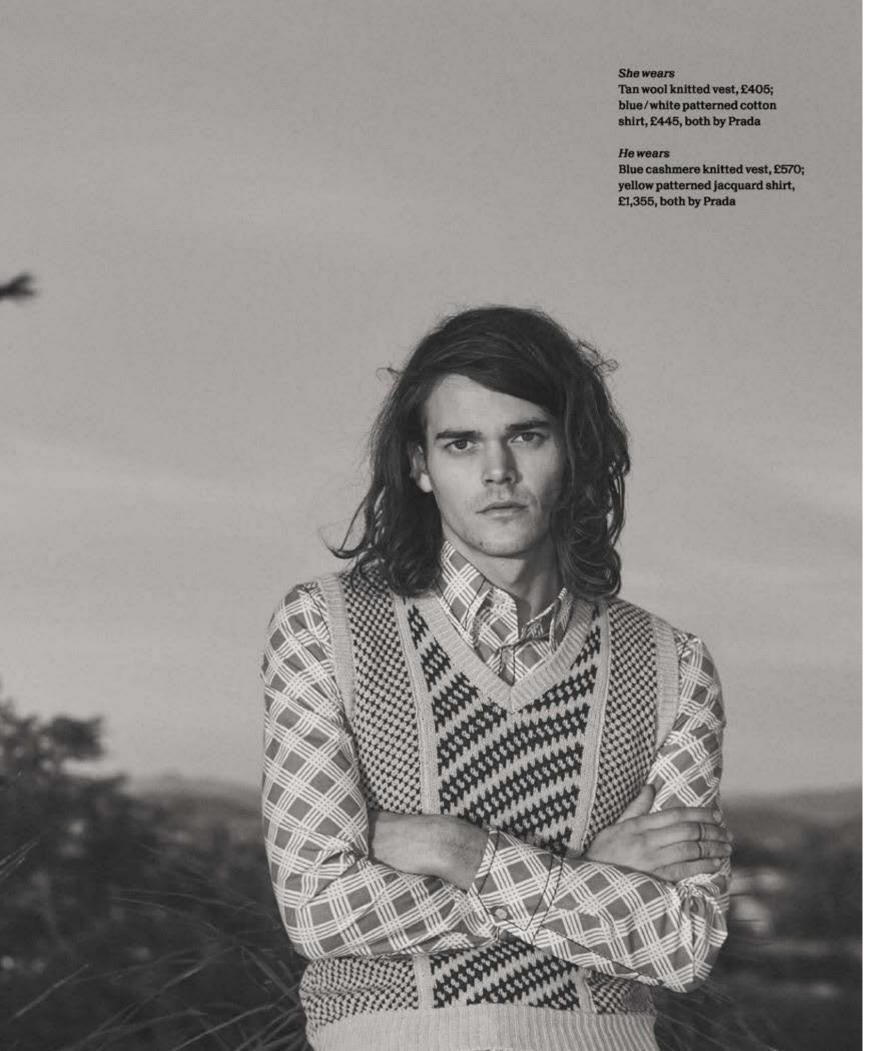




# Left Copper/brown cotton cardigan, £1,350; brown cotton vest, £450; blue checked wool trousers, £690; burgundy leather loafers, £655; navy/brown leather tote bag, £2,200, all by Salvatore Ferragamo

Above Red checked linen shirt, £130; red checked linen shorts, £110, both by Oliver Spencer







Above White bird-print sweatshirt, £75, by Penfield

Right
Petrol wool-gabardine jacket, £2,350;
cream silk/cashmere sweatshirt, £990;
brown wool-gabardine trousers, £790;
all by Ermenegildo Zegna Couture.
White leather plimsolls, £495, by Hermès







#### Left

Stone cotton jacket, £430; orange cotton T-shirt, £85, both by Polo Ralph Lauren. Tan/white camouflage patterned jeans, £255, by Ralph Lauren Black Label

#### Above

Orange suede/lambskin bomber jacket, £5,580; sand cotton/linen jacket, £2,000; beige linen striped T-shirt, £900; sand cotton one-pleat trousers, £610; white leather plimsolls, £495; red calfskin leather holdall, £3,600, all by Hermès







#### He wears

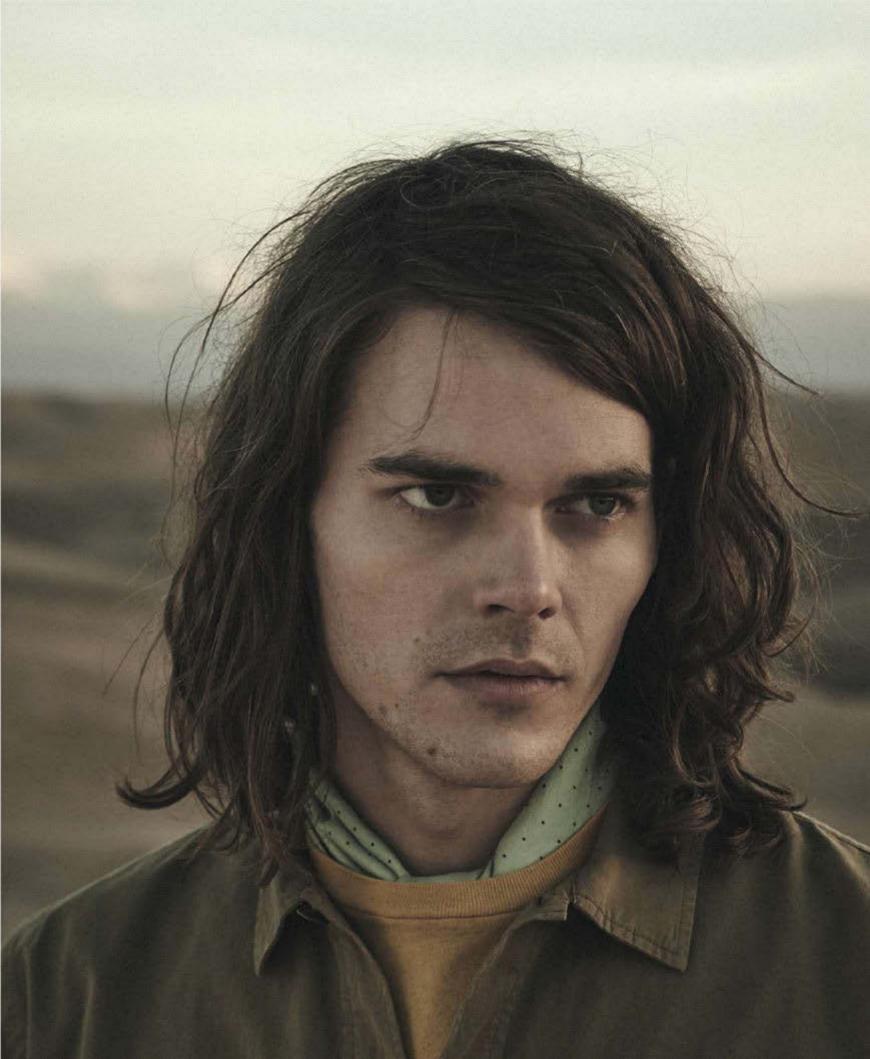
Beige wool knitted jumper, £125; khaki cotton shorts, £85; orange linen/cotton scarf, £45, all by Tommy Hilfiger

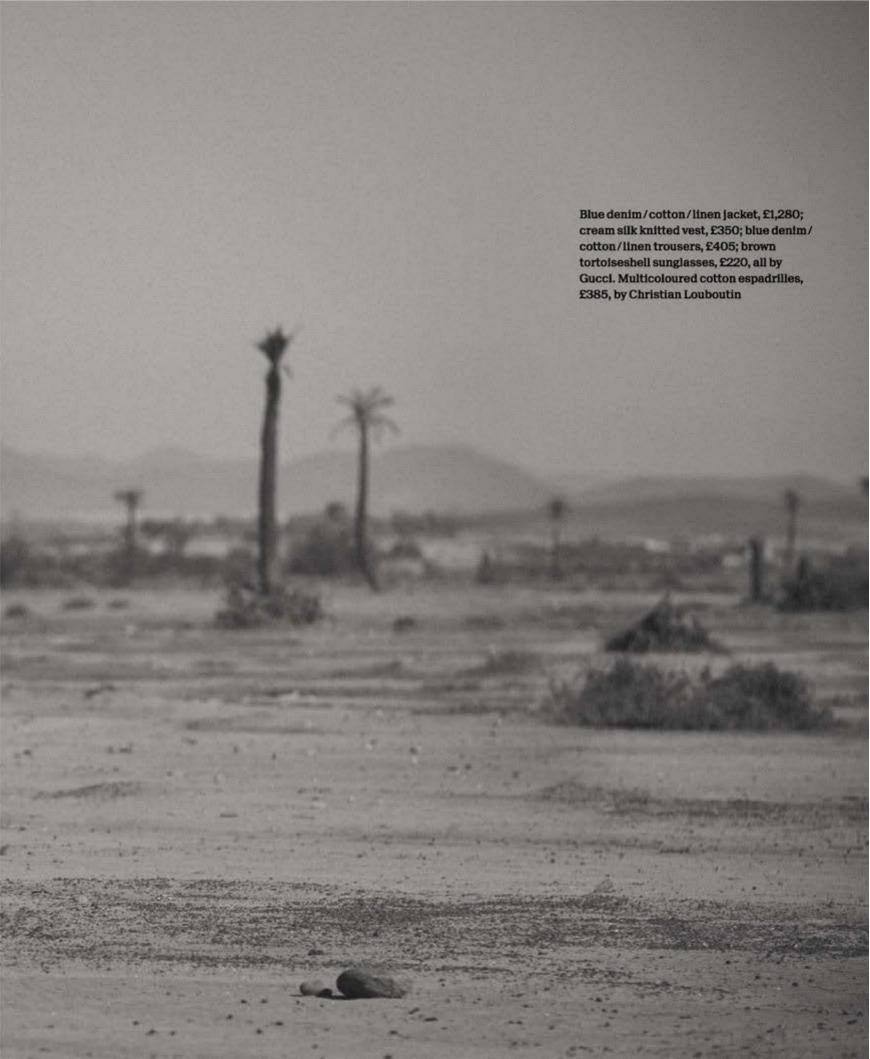
#### She wears

Navy/olive nylon/suede bomber jacket, £870; olive patterned cotton scarf, £110, both by Baartmans and Siegel. Olive bikini top, £95, by Heidi Klein. Blue denim shorts, £45, by Levi's

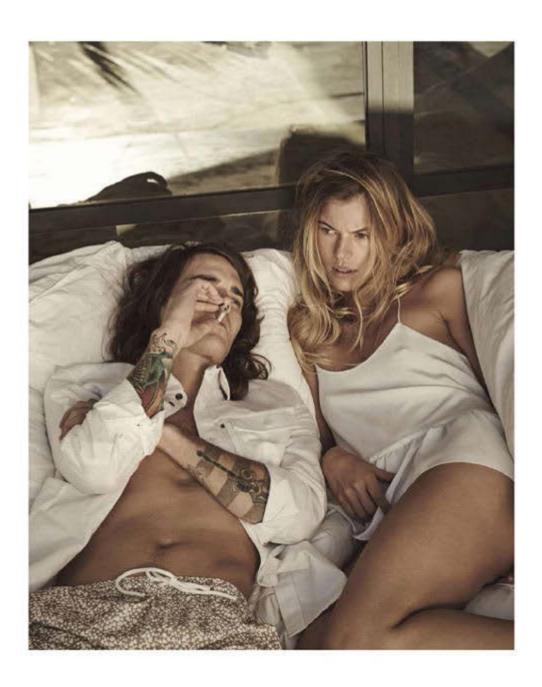
#### Right

Olive cotton work shirt, £155; mustard cotton T-shirt, £60, both by MHL by Margaret Howell. Mint green silk scarf, £110, by Margaret Howell









#### Left

Tan suede jacket, £3,350; pink cashmere polo shirt, £490; black/white gingham/wool trousers, £330, all by Alfred Dunhill. Multicoloured cotton espadrilles, £385, by Christian Louboutin

He wears White cotton shirt, £130, by Victorinox. Stone abstract print nylon swim shorts, £230, by Alfred Dunhill

She wears White silk top, £190, by Tibi













## Essentials No. 07 SWEATERS

Photographs by Sam Hofman



01 Emporio Armani – £250
02 Oliver Spencer – £160
03 Hackett – £145
04 Nicole Farhi – £150
05 Pringle of Scotland – £650
06 Richard James – £785
07 Tiger of Sweden – £150
08 Vivienne Westwood – £285
09 DKNY – £205
10 Michael Kors – £75

















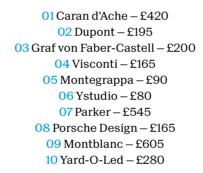


Essentials
No. 08

MECHANICAL
PENCILS



















spring morning in early-Sixties, economic boom time, Dolce Vita-era Italy. Enzo Ferrari, sports-car manufacturer, is busy in his office in Maranello, a town near Bologna in the Terra Dei Motori, the country's premier car-engineering region. A mechanic comes in. "The tractor guy's here, Mr Ferrari," he says. "He's brought his car in to be repaired again. And this time he says he wants to see you."

Then in his sixties, white-haired, elegant and temperamental, Enzo Ferrari is Italian celebrity-industrial aristocracy. His sleek, powerful gran turismo cars define motoring glamour and he mixes with royals and film stars. The tractor guy, on the other hand, is a bull-necked man in his early forties and son of a poor local farmer. After serving with the Italian air force in World War II, he bought up decommissioned military vehicles and turned that scrap into Italy's biggest agricultural tractor company. He can afford to buy Ferrari GTs now, but the clutches go when he guns the cars and he is fed up having to constantly bring them to Maranello for mending.

**Special** 

Enzo says, "Tell him I'm busy."

The tractor guy says, "I'll wait."

He waits all day. He grew up poor, was a prisoner of war, and, in his thirties, watched his wife die giving birth; he can deal with Enzo sodding Ferrari.

When Il Commendatore eventually comes down, the tractor guy says, "Ferrari, your cars are rubbish."

Enzo is furious. "What do you know?" he replies. "You may be able to drive a tractor but you will never be able to handle a Ferrari."

The argument continues, but it is that last insult that the tractor guy will remember forever. So stung is he that, as he drives out of the factory that evening, he decides he will teach Enzo a lesson, and when he gets home, he goes to the tractor factory to clear a space.

The tractor guy's name is Ferruccio Lamborghini, and he is going to build a car.

• • •

Fifty years on, the car company that Ferruccio went on to create after the argument (exact details of which are, of course, debated) is currently enjoying record sales. Ferruccio himself is long gone – he sold his last interests in 1974 and died in 1993 – but some of the firm's early spirit remains, and is being successfully leveraged by current owners Audi, particularly among the new tycoons in China. With a range comprising the V12 Aventador, the new V10 Huracán, plus the limited-run Veneno, Reventón and Sesto Elemento models,







Lamborghini sold 2,530 cars worldwide last year, up from 2,121 in 2013. Famous owners include David Beckham, Kanye West, Ralph Lauren, Axl Rose, Mark Wahlberg, Rihanna and, of course, Bruce Wayne, who in *The Dark Knight* favoured the now-replaced Murciélago.

Since taking over in 1998, Audi has built on Lamborghini's reputation for sporty, high-performance outrageousness, but that is now set to alter as the brand pushes into other categories.

"Lambo is the car brand that has the most opportunities to grow," its design director Filippo Perini tells me. "In two or three years, Lamborghini will change a lot." Specifically, it will soon begin produce the Urus, a 4x4 that will take Lambo values into the burgeoning luxury SUV market to compete with the Porsche Cayenne and Bentley Bentayga.

Perini is based, and the cars are still built, at the factory Ferruccio eventually built in Sant'Agata Bolognese, a small town in the landscape of flat farm fields and grids of light industrial units outside Bologna. These days, the front of the building is clad in the matt charcoal-grey tiles that signify international luxe, but round the back the scene is essentially unchanged: blokes in black overalls and trainers working on sawtooth-roofed production lines, or in factory yards where they

PREVIOUS PAGE: THE
2005 CONCEPT S, BASED
ON THE GALLARDO
FAR LEFT: THE 217MPH
AVENTADOR REPLACED
THE MURCIÉLAGO
AS LAMBO'S FLAGSHIP
LEFT: THE REAR OF
THE CARBON FIBRE
SESTO ELEMENTO
ABOVE: THE MIURA WAS THE
FASTEST ROAD CAR IN 1966

attend to low cars the intense colours of pencil leads, citrus fruit and fire engines. The fantastical cars look jarring in the context of oil, jacks and spanners; it's like walking into a petrol station to find an X-wing fighter being refuelled, or going into a pet shop that stocks unicorns.

Perini's Centro Stile, or styling centre, is at the far end of the complex, and this is where it goes a bit James Bond.

All factory visitors have stickers placed over their phones' camera lenses, but in this department security is locked down tight. You first come to an immaculate white room with a long glass table, TV screen and two huge, framed, moody images, one of a cut diamond, the other of a razor blade. Leading off from the room is a frosted-glass door that can be opened only from the inside, and has no intercom. When it opens, it is almost a surprise to be greeted not by Blofeld, but an affable, quietly spoken late-fortysomething man in a navy V-neck sweater and white shirt.

Perini, who designed both the Aventador and the Huracán, grew up obsessed by cars in Piacenza, to the south of Milan, and has been at Lamborghini since 2004. He worked for other companies including Alfa Romeo, SEAT and Audi before, but Lambo is different. At this level of car design, it can be like art: as the designer is not trying to meet a consumer need so much as to show people something they want to see but cannot yet quite imagine. His watchwords include "extreme", "unexpected", "uncompromised" and "Italia".

"The Lambo way is related to the country, to the people, in that they are not afraid of a challenge," he says. He talks fast, the ideas sometimes ahead of his English, so every now and then he pauses to let his brain catch up. "We were born out of a challenge [to Ferrari]. It's about thinking before it becomes logic. It's about the heart. The cars make you feel something without even going anywhere; just hearing the sound of the engine should give this feeling we call *attivo*, which means alive, or active."

It must be wonderful when he sees his imagination turned into steel, glass and rubber on the production line, I say. "Not really," he replies – he tries to avoid it, because it makes him cry, and now he's nearly 50, married, a father to one child and stepfather to another, that can be embarrassing. It's hard to control. Last year, he was at a media









presentation of the Huracán in Spain, all lights and fanfare, everyone looking at him. Everything was under control, but then the covers were pulled off the car and Perini spontaneously burst into tears.

•••

Cars get conflated with girls in the Italian imagination ("Cars and women, joy and pain" one saying goes) and it's hard to think of anything other than women that drives men mad like cars do. Sane men will spend all their time and money pursuing the thrill and beauty of an automobile, and although Ferruccio Lamborghini was a good businessman, he was not immune. Partly because of this, cars produced under his stewardship between 1964 and 1974 make up one of the most spectacular and influential sequences in motoring history.

Aaron Robinson, executive editor at *Car and Driver* magazine in the US, and an authority on Lamborghini, points out that the original plan was straightforward. Ferruccio, he says, "thought he could build a better product and service his customers better than his competitors". What he intended to build were "businessman's-express" cars – big, frontengined grand tourers to speed across the new motorways then opening up Europe – and after recruiting a set of young, restless engineers from Ferrari and elsewhere, his first two cars, the 350 GT and 400 GT, were just that. They sold reasonably well to the old-moneyed Europeans (and Paul McCartney, who bought a 400 GT after The Beatles' *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was launched), but the young employees, schooled in Ferrari's racing stable, had other ideas.

In 1966, they persuaded the boss to produce a car, designed secretly in their spare time, that would revolutionise the entire sports car market. The Miura had its V12 engine innovatively mid-mounted behind the two front seats. The position reduced cockpit space, but spread the engine weight more evenly over the wheels, which vastly improved the handling. That, coupled with the pace (its top speed of 170mph made it the fastest road car available) and the spectacular body designed by 27-year-old Marcello Gandini at the legendary Gruppo Bertone design house in Turin, attracted an acclaim that endures today. Many say the modern high-performance, two-seater, mid-engine sports car and even the notion of the "supercar" begins here. Perini remembers seeing his first one at the age of 10, in the streets in Piacenza. It was light blue and looked very big and became "a kind of dream". He went home and drew it.

The name alluded to a breed of Spanish fighting bull: Ferruccio, a Taurus, had become interested in the sport after visiting Spain in 1962, and adopted the bull as the brand's emblem. According to a long-time female member of Lambo staff I meet, however, the bodywork was designed to evoke not a bull but "a woman, which is why it has the eyelashes on the headlamps". JG Ballard must have loved it.

The Miura was followed by the Espada, a four-seater GT, again designed by Gandini, which nowadays tends to be the favourite of the collector-purist. Named after a matador's dagger, the Espada, Robinson says, looked far more modern and had superior engine, suspension and

THE 350 GT, LAMBO'S FIRST PRODUCTION CAR; ONLY 120 WERE BUILT, MAKING IT ULTRA-RARE TODAY

brakes than its rival, the Ferrari 365. Among some nice incidental touches were a set of suitcases custom-made to fit in the back. It sold well, particularly in oldmoney Switzerland, with more than 1,200

made between 1968 and 1978; by contrast only 474 Miuras were made, which is one reason they can now cost the best part of £1m).

Ferruccio's own tastes were conservative: his favourite model was the Jarama, an unsporty businessman's express that effectively succeeded the 400GT. This was the kind of safe, solid vehicle he thought the company needed, but the car that now seems his defining achievement was the opposite. The Countach, which replaced the Miura and debuted in 1971, became the definitive Seventies supercar. Successive generations of kids growing up across Europe in the Seventies and Eighties may have never seen one, but would remember it from Top Trumps sets as the car that beat all others on everything — well, everything except fuel consumption, anyway. Car enthusiasts would watch as Gandini's new wedge-shaped design, with the cockpit forward and nose shortened, influenced supercar shapes for the next 40 years.

Its engine made it one of the fastest production cars of the decade, with a top speed near the magical 300kmh (185mph) that manufacturers were then striving for, and Gandini's design was seen by some commentators as almost naive and inexperienced. Certainly, it required radical measures to make it work: the doors had to open upwards, and early models were designed so the rear-view mirror could be replaced by a periscope. Importantly, however, its flat, trapezoidal panels — in keeping with Ferruccio's taste for hexagons — established a look for subsequent Lamborghinis that has continued through the stealth-jet influenced designs of the Reventon and Aventador. You can see them in the faces of the cut diamond on Perini's wall.

Incidentally, unlike most other Lamborghinis, its name comes not from bullfighting, but from the dialect expression uttered by a Bertone security guard when the car was revealed to Ferruccio. "Countach" (pronounced "kunt-ash") is a now old-fashioned exclamation in recognition of a beautiful woman; the car that was arguably the most beautiful vehicle of its era was thus effectively called the Lamborghini "Blimey". Maybe it was justified. "Those first ten years were an amazing achievement for a young company run mostly by twentysomethings," says Robinson. "So much was accomplished, so much chipping away at the old order. So much energy and such forward-looking thinking and design."

Sadly, before the first Countach was delivered in 1974, Ferruccio was gone, frustrated by union disputes and forced to sell when falling demand hit the tractor business and then the 1973 oil crisis damaged the market for 10mpg supercars. There were attempts at smaller cars such as the Urraco, but the new Swiss owners couldn't arrest the decline, the original team broke up, and by 1978 the company was bankrupt and run by an Italian government nominee. Total output that year was 16 cars, and yet, somehow, the factory didn't close.

•••

To understand Lamborghini, says Perini, you have to first understand the Terra Dei Motori, or "Land of the Engine". In this 240km valley lie the bases of Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati, Ducati, Moto Morini and Malaguti, the racetracks of Imola and Misano, 13 motoring museums, 12 private collections and countless automotive suppliers and specialist mechanics. It is possibly the most car-obsessed area in Europe. "I think it's because of the weather," Perini says. "I'm not kidding. It's very hot in summer, very cold in the winter and the land

is always hung with fog in the middle seasons. It's not normal and I think it somehow makes normal people who want to be involved with something that is far from the normal life."

Visiting the factory in the cold, fog-shrouded days of early spring, you can see what he means. The people looking after you take you for lunch, give you recipes for proper ragu bolognese, and have quick fags in the yard watching lads switch the wheels on a Huracán. Then, suddenly, you're doing an interview under a huge picture of a razor blade, talking to a woman about a car with eyes whose shape looks like a lady's, and looking outside at the sign of a mad bull shrouded in mist.

I can imagine the PR suits at Audi being uncomfortable with this image, but they shouldn't be: it is fantastic in every sense of the word, and a lot more interesting than the usual car "brand experience".

• • •

Unlike Ferrari, Lamborghini never seriously engaged in car racing: Ferruccio wasn't interested, and once claimed he couldn't get involved because if a driver had been killed in his cars, he would have burned down the factory. In the absence of that heritage, the spectacles of the Miura and the Countach, which went on to sell more than 2,000 between 1974 and 1990, have tended to influence the brand's destiny as what Robinson calls a "purveyor of automotive outrageousness". Through the Eighties and Nineties, it was badly managed, first between 1980 and 1987 by sugar tycoons the Mimran brothers, then Chrysler (1987–93), and then, before Audi, the Indonesian Megatech.



Yet among some forgettable projects, the factory still produced significant cars. Most notable was the Diablo, designed by Gandini in the late Eighties to replace the Countach.

Chrysler may have alienated Gandini by softening the Diablo's shape in Detroit but it did become what Jeremy Clarkson called "the biggest head-turner in the world" and was among the first production cars to reach the coveted 200mph top speed. With its Breguet dashboard clock, it was also notably more luxurious and leatherpadded inside and sold in decent numbers, though not the 500 a year envisaged by the American owner.

When, under Audi, the Diablo was replaced by the ultra-low-slung V12 Murciélago in 2001, a revival got underway, though long-term aficionados sniff at the Germans' neglect of the brand's GT heritage (these days, Ferrari and Lambo fans both accuse each other of neglecting classicism and embracing the vulgar flashiness 'n' brashness in order to attract China's nouveau riche). The 2003 Gallardo became the best-selling Lamborghini ever, and since then, Perini has reinvigorated the design language with hexagons and trapezoids inspired by American stealth jets.

"We work a lot with geometrical lines but I ask my designers to not create surfaces because of lines, but to create lines because of volume," he explains. "I know it's complicated but the car should be like a cut diamond; the lines of the diamond are created because of the intersection of surfaces and that principle is the same with our cars. It's the DNA. You see with some cars, the lines have come first. It's interesting, it means our cars reflect light differently. We did

a presentation in the desert where there was an Audi and a Lamborghini, both painted the same colour, but the Lamborghini looked much brighter." It was this reflective capacity, he adds, that led Lambo to produce Aventadors in the matt grey that has since been adopted as status-paint by drivers of other car brands.

• • •

The maker of modern supercars inhabits a different world from the one in which an ambitious tractor maker could knock up something in the corner of a factory to settle a grudge. The high development costs always made margins questionable, but now safety legislation is way tighter and the concentration of manufacturing in the hands of a few multinationals makes it tough for small independents to compete.

The current Lamborghini president and CEO, German Stephan Winkelmann, a former paratrooper with playboy hair and leather and bead bangles under his undone cuffs, has admitted a sports car company these days has to justify its existence beyond being about "a strong brand and beautiful cars for the happy few". Nowadays, a supercar developer pays its way with research that feeds back into its parent company's mainstream ranges, as Ferrari's feeds back to Fiat. Today, Lamborghini's people want to talk about their pioneering work with carbon fibre, eco-initiatives, brand extensions and spin-offs. It can all feel a bit... pedestrian.

"Brands like Lamborghini are expensive and needy for the tiny revenue they produce," says Aaron Robinson. "You can't just give them [components shared by the parent group] and slap a Lambo badge on it. The engineering and development are all unique and thus expensive. They have to go where their customers are going and leverage Volkswagen Group [Audi's parent] platforms to reduce development costs, which means an SUV. Done right, an SUV will become Lamborghini's flagship and its most recognised vehicle. They need to replace the Aventador with a hybrid first, because competitors have created an expectation for hybridisation among supercar purchasers. If your £200,000-plus supercar can't move under electric power, it's going to seem awfully antiquated in this market."

And yet. On the spring day that I meet Filippo Perini in his office, he has earlier seen some new Ferrari renderings and has been taking notes because, "first you have to beat your competitors! When we wake up in the morning, we think, we have to beat them!"

And what do they think about Lamborghini?

"The same!"

They want to beat you as well?

"Yes! Always! But we know each other very well. We are all designers, we all feel the same pressure and we all love beautiful cars."

Beautiful cars or fast cars? I ask.

He shakes his head. "It's not about the speed. It's about the heart, and the beauty. What touches a car fan is the appearance; the appearance communicates something to you, so the acceleration figure – you know that from the outside. I have known lots of racing drivers, and I have known drivers who lose races, but still love their car because it's beautiful.

"In the end, it's about beauty," he says. "The beauty. Yes." ENDS lamborghini.com

Interview by Johnny Davis — Portrait by Danilo Scarpati



## WHAT I'VE LEARNED

**ENNIO MORRICONE** 

Composer, 86



I wake early. I do some physical exercise in the house. Then, around 7am, I go out to buy the newspapers. I read the newspapers. I wait for my wife to wake up and then we have breakfast. I start work around 8.30am. And that's my day, that's my routine.

**Recently, there was an analysis** of the 100 best music scores of the last century. *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* [1966] was second best. The first was by John Williams, an American. It was an American poll.

"Music composed, arranged and conducted by Ennio Morricone." This is an idea I coined because I wanted people to understand I was in charge of everything. The composition, conducting the orchestra and all the organisation and arrangement. Now, many other composers use the same kind of statement.

**Dino De Laurentiis asked me to move** to Hollywood. I said, "No." I wanted to stay in Rome.

#### The secret to a long and happy marriage?

Always be true to one another, be sincere and always tell the truth. There was also the fact that Maria and I have had four kids.

**In Django Unchained** [2012], there's that sequence where a dog attacks and eats a man. That was too much. I sent a message to Quentin Tarantino and told him that was too strong.

My father played the trumpet. He was an excellent musician. There was always music in the house. I often played beside him as second trumpet in the same orchestras. Sometimes we recorded the music for films together. That was a good way of learning.

Sergio Leone discussed with me the possibility of making a film on the Siege of Leningrad. But he never asked me to write music for that film, the same as he didn't ask me to write music for any of his preceding films. There was a reason. It was because he knew he was going to die. He had a serious congenital problem with his heart, and he didn't want to undergo surgery. He refused it. That's the reason he

never asked me to start the music, because he knew he wasn't going to make it.

My family suffered because of work commitments. I was either in the studio recording or I was closed off writing music. So, I wasn't able to dedicate as much time to them as I should. My wife was bringing up the children on her own. So I decided: spend more time with your family. And that's what I did.

**It's difficult to do a good job** if you are not well organised. Some people will say, "I'm free, I improvise." Maybe they go to bed late at night. Maybe they wake up late in the morning. For me that would be impossible.

It's much better when you're friends with a director. There must be mutual respect and trust between director and composer but if there is friendship, then the work is much better. It means you can be brave enough to propose strange and interesting things.

When I was 12, I entered the Santa Cecilia Conservatory [in Rome] and started studying composition. After a few months, I went directly to the third year. In my mind, I was supposed to be in the third year from the start. Then I went to [acclaimed composer Goffredo] Petrassi's class. And that was a fundamental part of my training: I learned a lot about *scholar Romana*, a way of approaching music composition that was based on the knowledge of what had been done before by the great Roman composers.

**Brian De Palma never smiles.** But he is a great director: very good at choosing stories, he pays a lot of attention to the screenplay and he's very accurate.

A difficult period for work came after World War II. My father was never out of a job but I worked with him. I also played on my own and contributed to the family income.

It was unusual for a promising young musician to go into making so-called pop music, and music for television. But I was invited, so I started doing both, even while I was studying with Petrassi. Maestro Petrassi was not so happy.

**Film composers must be** at the service of the film. You cannot go against the film.

#### I used a typewriter in one of my scores

[1966 Italian crime drama *Wake Up and Die*] but I was not the first one to do that; somebody had done it before. The real novelty was mixing my music with sounds from real life. That was a novelty I enjoyed.

My greatest luxury is time at home.

In *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*'s main title theme, there's a different sound for the three main characters. The 'Ugly' [representing Mexican bandit Tuco Ramirez] is the actual sound of a coyote, turned into a music piece.

**It was a real friendship** with Sergio Leone. Our families were friends, the wives were friends, the children were friends.

I began to think I'd never win an Oscar [after being nominated in 1979, 1987, 1988, 1992 and 1991; Clint Eastwood finally presented him with an Honorary Academy Award in 2007]. But it was not such a big concern. I never had awards and accolades in mind. But they are very good for the films, and good promotion for the industry.

At a certain point in my life, Maria became a very important partner for my music composition, because I started having her listen to the music before I gave it to the director. Sometimes, the film-makers weren't making the most appropriate choices, so I decided to have my wife choose. She was excellent at it, with a wonderful ear.

#### Inspiration comes from my background,

from my experience, from the studies I did, the deep knowledge of the history of music, the history of music composition, the fact I have composed music scores for different kinds of films, even the less famous and less important films, where I had the opportunity to do more experimental things. Also from the fact I worked in television, radio and cinema. I really love this city: I've always lived here in Rome. But Rome doesn't inspire me. ENDS





#### From left Brown cotton/linen checked shirt, £360, by Tod's. Hazelnut gabardine stretch trousers, £410, by Gucci. Tan/cream leather/ canvas shoes, £170; tan leather

Stone silk abstract-print short-sleeved shirt, £450, by Hardy Amies. Khaki cotton trousers, £245, by Alfred Dunhill. Tan/cream calfskin shoes, £395, by JM Weston. Tan calfskin tote bag, £2,370; tan leather belt, £480, both by Louis Vuitton





#### From left

Brown wool Prince of Wales check suit, £1,590; brown/tan suede/leather tote bag, £2,250, both by Alfred Dunhill Copper/grey/black cotton checked shirt, £210; aquamarine suede loafers, £410, both by Gucci. Grey merino wool socks, £14, by Pantherella

Coral wool checked singlebreasted jacket, £595; coral wool checked trousers, £250; grey suede double monk-strap shoes, £495, all by Hardy Amies. Red/black checked cotton socks, £15, by Hackett

Navy wool cropped jacket, £1,485; navy wool skirt, £1,135, both by Prada. Black sheer tights, £18, by Falke. Beige suede court shoes, £440, by Manolo Blahnik. Brown suede shoulder bag, £1,200, by Gucci

Azul/black checked wool suit, £1,900, by Gucci. Blue suede shoes, £295, by Church's. Blue cotton socks, £13, by Pantherella. Brown leather/ suede bag, £835, by Tod's

Brown checked linen suit, £1,360, by Tod's. Brown suede ankle boots, £415, by JM Weston. Dark green cotton socks, £13, by Pantherella





# From left Blue silk long-sleeved T-shirt, £115, by Calvin Klein Jeans. Blue denim jeans, £405; black leather loafers, £520, both by Prada

Ice blue washed-out denim jeans, £140, both by Calvin Klein Jeans. Brown patent leather loafers, £455, by Tod's. Red/white leather handbag, £1,580, by Louis Vuitton

Red silk shirt, £690, by Louis Vuitton. Blue selvedge denim jeans, £150, by Paul Smith Jeans. Oxblood leather loafers, £450, by Jimmy Choo. Chocolate plaited leather dog lead, £127, by Mungo & Maud

Yellow silk T-shirt, £330, by Alfred Dunhill. White cotton trousers, £570; beige leather messenger bag, £1,940, both by Gucci. Navy leather loafers, £145, by Camper





#### From left

Dark brown three-piece suit, £1,785; white cotton shirt, £215; brown leather double monk-strap shoes, £730; brown leather briefcase, £1,025; all by Dolce & Gabbana. Brown cotton socks, £15, by Pantherella

Black silk/cotton singlebreasted suit, £600, by Calvin Klein Platinum. White cotton shirt, £210; black grained leather case, £1,150, both by Alfred Dunhill. Black leather monk-strap shoes, £525, by Crockett & Jones. Grey cotton socks, £12, by Falke

Cream wool sleeveless dress, £750, by Pringle. Nude patent leather shoes, £425, by Christian Louboutin

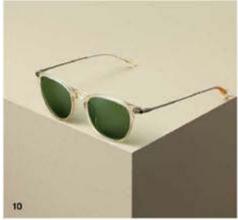
Navy wool micro-check double-breasted jacket, £575; white cotton shirt, £115; navy wool micro-check trousers, £215, all by Hardy Amies. Black calfskin derby shoes, £625, by JM Weston. Burgundy cotton socks, £12, by Falke

Photo assistants: Klemen Llovar, Loes Treffers Fashion assistants: Stephanie Crain, Jonathan Dann, Patrick Elliott Hair/make-up: Nikki de Vries Models: Daniel Thomassen, Dennis van Goyen, Eduard Sturm, Ellen Scholten at De Boekers; Quasy at Mod.s Production: Jess Porter at Mini Title See Stockists page for details









### Essentials No. 09 SUNGLASSES

Photographs by Sam Hofman



01 Dior Homme – £370
02 Cutler & Gross – £390
03 Dolce & Gabbana – £184
04 EB Meyrowitz – £595
05 Prada – £230
06 Tom Ford – £294
07 Paul Smith – £216
08 Ray-Ban – £135
09 Persol – £254
10 Oliver Peoples – £255

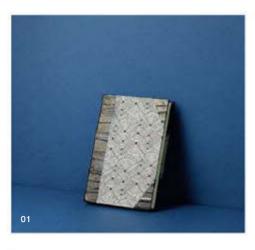
























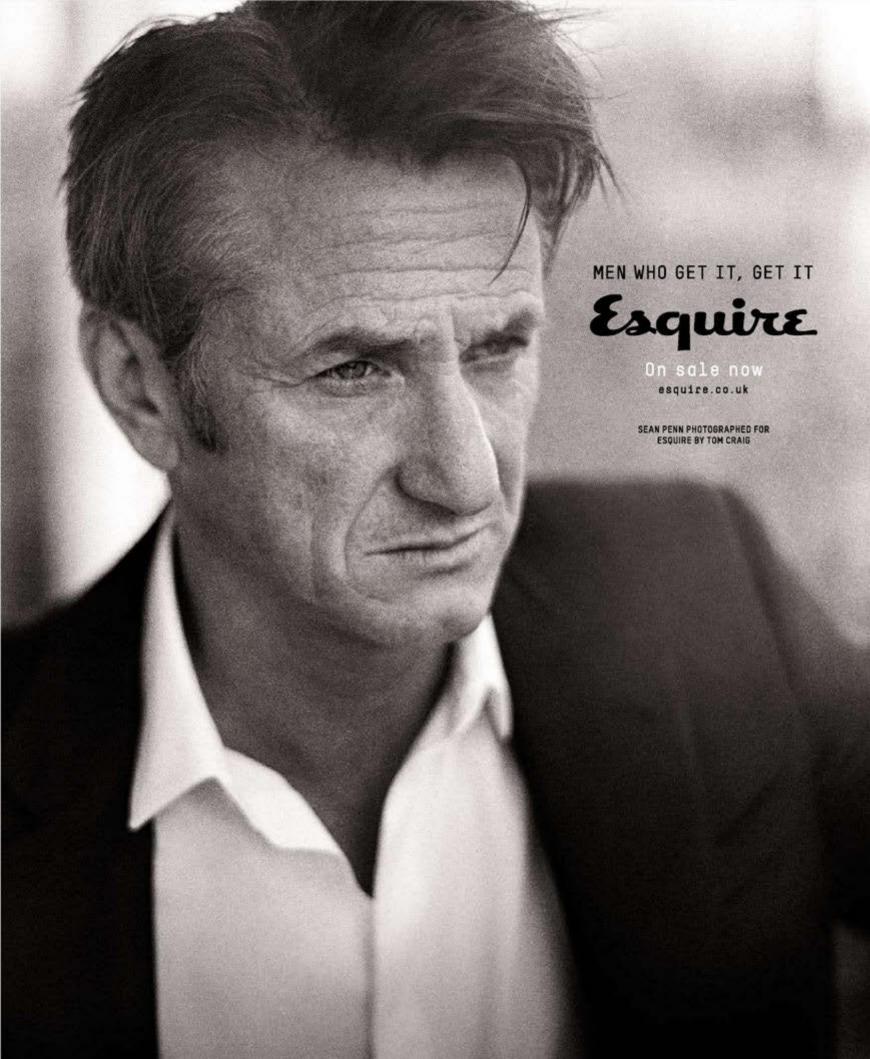












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## THE MOMENT





No. 05

## Domenico Dolce recalls one of his earliest photo shoots in his homeland of Sicily

This picture was taken in Sicily in 1987 when we were shooting one of our first campaigns. I can't remember exactly where - Aci Trezza or Aci Castello, I think, one of the villages close to Catania. It was our first time working with Ferdinando Scianna, who we'd been talking to for about six months to persuade him to shoot for us. He kept saying he was a Magnum photo reporter, that fashion wasn't his thing, but in the end we got him to say yes. And we got Marpessa Hennink, who we loved. For us, she represented a new type of model, a complete break from the Eighties girls. By then, she was a big supermodel but when she was starting out her boyfriend was a friend of mine, and she opened our very first show. So we all travelled to Sicily, Ferdinando, Marpessa, Stefano [above, in the driving seat] and I. No entourage, no hair stylists, no make-up assistants, nothing. At Catania airport we rented a car, and a van for the clothes, and set off. It was an adventure: we didn't know anything, but we really believed in Ferdinando, and we just wanted to explore something new. And back then, too, we were pazzi, completely crazy! Every day we shot on the streets. And the people understood – they were curious, obviously, but then it was spontaneous – no camera phones, no release forms, we just grabbed people. I remember this tiny, old lady who started telling us all this huge drama that was going on in her life, she was so excited and

animated, and the instant we asked her to be in the shot she snapped straight to attention. That's typical Sicilian for you – sad, but ready! It's my home, I'm from there, but if you have ambition, you have to get out. There's always drama, blood, they're - I'm not sure how you say it here - but senza tempo. Timeless. When Stefano and I talk about this image, it brings back a lot of happy memories. We met when I was 24 and he was about 21, and this is about four years later. At that stage, Dolce & Gabbana was just the two of us, and our studio in Milan was two little rooms. We had no staff, we did everything between us; I was a very good cleaner. But the photo represents a very good moment for Dolce & Gabbana, when we really understood what we wanted to be. We had a very clear muse: Anna Magnani [Italian actress]. She was strong, she had that thing of sexy without being vulgar, of being feminine and masculine, happy, sad, a big personality. I don't know what I'm holding... a camera, maybe? Nowadays it would be a mobile phone but this is 1987. When I look at the clothes I remember them straight away: I'm wearing Comme des Garçons and Persols and Stefano's in Yohji Yamamoto. It's very funny, he looks so worried, and I'm so relaxed! We were ambitious, but we could never have predicted where we have ended up. But you know what I see when I look at the photo? That we are in love. ENDS dolcegabbana.com

